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DISCUSSION

ON
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METHODIST EPISCOPACY,

BETWEEN

REV. E. J. HAMILL,
OF THE ALABAMA CONFERENCE, AND PASTOR OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, SOUTH, TUSKEGEE, ALA.

AND

SAMUEL HENDERSON,
PASTOR OF THE TUSKEGEE BAPTIST CHURCH, AND EDITOR OF THE
SOUTH-WESTERN BAPTIST.

Published at the mutual request of Baptists and Methodists.

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."—PAUL.

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FIFTH THOUSAND.

CHARLESTON:
SOUTHERN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
No. 229 King Street.

1856.

A. F.



Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by
REV. E. J. HAMILL AND SAMUEL HENDERSON,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of South-Carolina.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

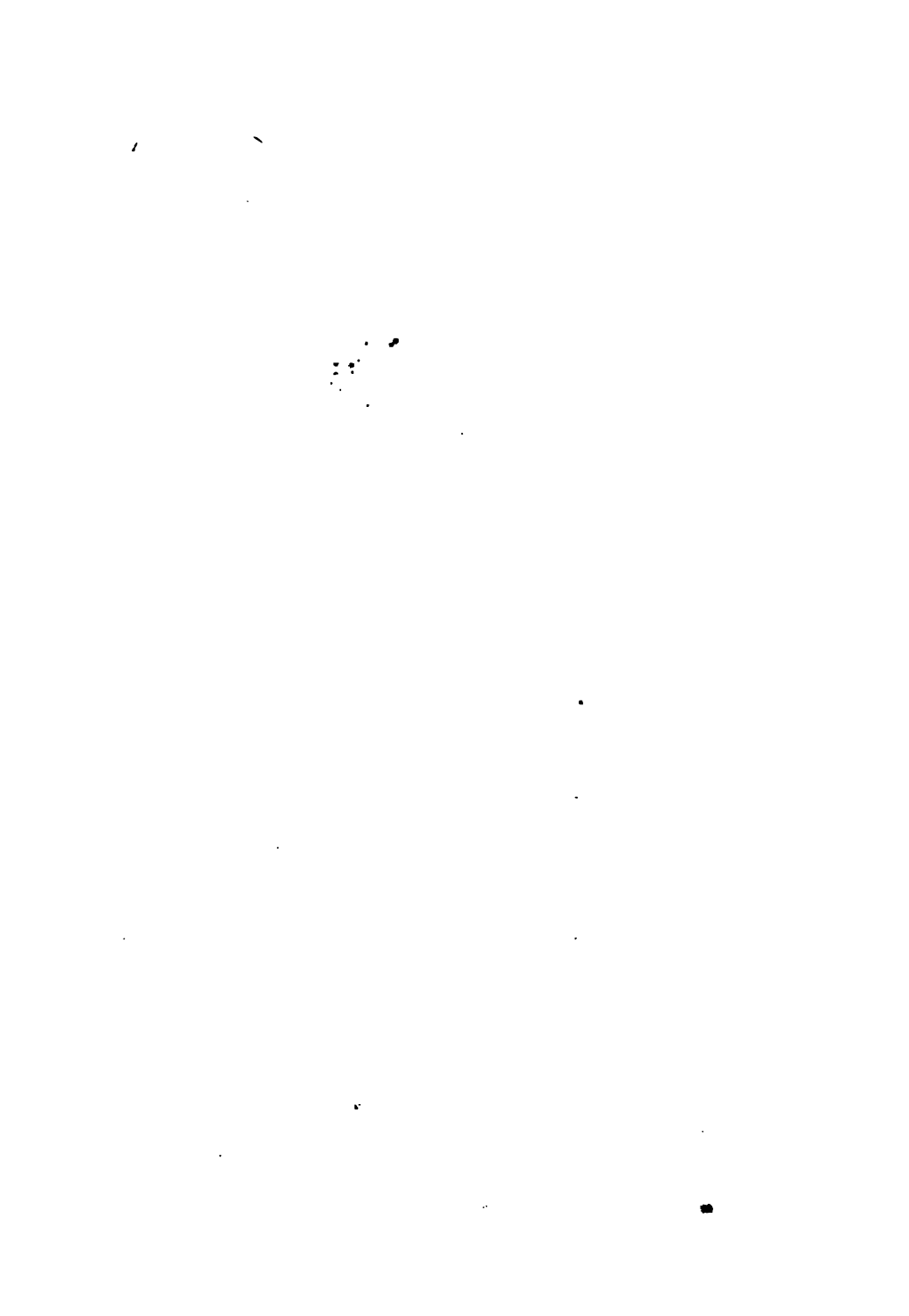
IN preparing a second edition of this discussion for the press, I must be allowed to express my grateful acknowledgements to the public for the favor with which the first was received. That an edition of four thousand should have been disposed of in about four months, is not a little encouraging to the parties represented in the work. Engagements occupying my entire time prevents me from giving my personal attention to the business of publishing; and I have therefore turned over the whole matter to the Southern Baptist Publication Society. The mutual interest of the parties in the copy-right, leaves each free to select his own method of publishing.

Several errors which appeared in the first edition, have been corrected—some of the matter has been transposed, so as more distinctly to preserve the chain of argument, and in the Appendix, some articles have been left out, and one added, which I trust will be more serviceable and edifying to the reader. On the whole, the present edition will be a decided improvement on the former.

TUSKEGEE, ALA., AUGUST, 1856.

S. H.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN introducing the following pages to the public, it is proper that we give a succinct statement of the origin of the discussion, as well as the reasons which have induced us to publish it in this form.

In the month of April, 1855, an article was copied into the columns of the 'South Western Baptist,' from the 'Western Watchman,' entitled "**EPISCOPAL METHODISM ANTI-AMERICAN.**" [The article from the 'Western Watchman' is inserted in the volume, because of its connection with the discussion.] The pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuskegee, the Rev. E. J. HAMILL, feeling that injustice had been done his denomination in that article, wrote a reply to it, which reply was countersigned by three members of his charge, and offered it to the editors of the 'Baptist,' for publication. It was cheerfully accepted; and as the junior editor of that paper, Rev. J. M. WARR, was about retiring from his position, it devolved upon the senior editor to rejoin to that communication. The editor felt called upon, in terms which he could not mistake, either to repudiate the article from the 'Watchman,' or to defend it. And while he freely acknowledged that there was a portion of that article obnoxious to the charge of injustice, from which he cheerfully withdrew any implied endorsement which its simple republication involved, he at the same time felt bound to maintain, that the main scope of the argument it contained, was subject to no such charge, and could be, in his opinion, successfully maintained. (Perhaps it is due to the editor, to state, that the article from the 'Watchman' was copied by his junior associate, and in print some time before he saw it.) He therefore took the ground, "**THAT THE EPISCOPACY OF METHODISM IS ANTI-DEMOCRATIC AND ANTI-REPUBLICAN; THAT IN SO**

FAR AS ITS OPERATION IS UNRESTRICTED BY MODIFYING AGENCIES, IT IS ESSENTIALLY AND NECESSARILY IN DIRECT ANTAGONISM TO THE GENIUS OF OUR FREE INSTITUTIONS;" and that its origin and history, up to this time, had developed a series of facts and principles totally irreconcilable with American Democracy. On the other hand, the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church maintained THAT THE ANALOGY BETWEEN THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES, in those points in which the great Head of the Church has allowed scope for human legislation, WAS STRIKING. This position he believed he could satisfactorily establish, and therefore felt bound to accept the issue tendered in the above proposition by the senior editor of the 'South Western Baptist.' The discussion which was thus commenced, continued in the columns of the 'Baptist,' with occasional intervals, until the latter part of November, 1855.

Such, in brief, is the history of the origin of a discussion, which is now offered to the public in this form by the parties, in response to the wishes of their respective denominations, which they do not feel at liberty to disregard. As far as can be ascertained, some seventeen Baptist Associations in Alabama, as well as the Florida Baptist State Convention, have called on us to publish it in book form. Several Quarterly Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have United in the same request. A few extracts from the Minutes of some of these bodies, will furnish the reader with our apology for consenting to its publication in this form:

From the Minutes of the Tuskegee Association.

"We observe that a very able discussion has lately been carried on through the columns of the 'South Western Baptist,' between the editor and the Rev. E. J. HAMIL, relating to the organization and government of a scriptural Church, and the claims of Episcopacy to a gospel origin, and as contrasted with the genius of our [civil] institutions. Your committee are of opinion that this discussion should be published entire, and that such *addenda* be furnished by the editor, Elder Samuel Henderson, as shall exhibit the teachings of the Scriptures as to the constitution and government of a properly organized Church. Your committee would recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

"1. *Resolved*, That this Association do most earnestly request the editor of the 'South Western Baptist,' Elder SAMUEL HENDERSON, to publish in a more durable form, the discussion lately concluded between himself and the Rev. E. J. HAMILL, above alluded to, adding thereto such remarks upon scriptural Church organization and discipline as he may think expedient.

"2. *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Association, and of the denomination generally, are due to Brother HENDERSON, for the able manner in which he has conducted said discussion.

"3. *Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed by the chair, to raise funds to aid Brother HENDERSON to publish said discussion in book form."

Extract from the proceedings of the Fourth Quarterly Conference, Tuskegee Station, Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"WHEREAS, a discussion has been going on for some time, in the 'South Western Baptist,' between Rev. E. J. HAMILL and Rev. SAM'L. HENDERSON, on the question of the Republicanism of the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church: And whereas, we believe the publication of this discussion in permanent form would promote the interest of truth, and effectually defend our Church polity from unjust assaults; therefore,

"*Resolved*, By the members of the Fourth Quarterly Conference, Tuskegee Station, Alabama Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, that we do recommend the publication of said discussion in permanent form.

"*Resolved secondly*, That the following persons, J. W. Willis, J. H. Smith, and Dr. R. W. Howard, be appointed a committee to confer with the Rev. SAMUEL HENDERSON, and other members of the Baptist Church, and take such steps as may be deemed necessary in order to secure the joint publication of the aforesaid discussion."

From the minutes of the Coosa River Baptist Association.

"1st. *Resolved*, That we highly approve both the spirit and ability which Brother HENDERSON has evinced in the late discussion in the 'South Western Baptist,' with the Rev. E. J. HAMILL, on the question, "Is Methodist Episcopacy, in its nature and tendencies, anti-Democratic and anti-Republican," and request that it be published as early as possible, in a more durable form."

Tuscaloosa Baptist Association.

"3. *Resolved*, That we have viewed with decided interest and satisfaction, the progress and result of the late discussion on Methodist Episcopacy, between the editor [of the 'S. W. Baptist,'] and Rev. Mr. HAMILL, of the Methodist Church; and believing that the cause of truth would be subserved thereby, cordially unite in requesting Brother HENDERSON to give it to the public in a more convenient and durable form."

Central Baptist Association.

* * * * "We are of opinion that the publication of that discussion, in book form, would greatly tend to promote the cause of truth. We therefore, recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

"2d. *Resolved*, That the editor of the 'South Western Baptist' be requested, at as early a day as will suit his convenience, to publish in book form, the discussion between himself and the Rev. Mr. HAMILL, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. South, above alluded to.

"3d. *Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed at this time, to procure subscriptions for said book."

Unity Baptist Association.

"Whereas, the discussion on Episcopal Church government, between Revs. SAMUEL HENDERSON and E. J. HAMILL, as recently published in the 'South Western Baptist,' has been conducted in a mild and Christian-like manner, and believing that the same is worthy of being placed in a more durable form:

"1. *Resolved*, That this Association most earnestly request the Southern Baptist Publication Society to publish said debate, with such addenda as shall exhibit the teachings of the Scriptures, as to the constitution and government of a properly organized Church, as a part of the religious literature of the Baptist denomination.

"2. *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Association are hereby tendered to Brother HENDERSON, for the able and Christian-like manner in which he has conducted said discussion."

Alabama Baptist Association.

"We also recommend the publication of the late discussion in the 'South Western Baptist,' between the Rev. SAMUEL HENDERSON

INTRODUCTION.

IV

and the Rev. E. J. HAMILL, in book pamphlet form, with such additional matter on Church government, as the said Rev. S. HENDERSON may desire."

Liberty Baptist Association, (Chambers County.)

"*Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this body, that the publication of the discussion recently concluded between Rev. S. HENDERSON and Rev. E. J. HAMILL, on the tendencies of "Methodist Episcopacy," would do much for the advancement of the cause of truth; that we earnestly request Brother HENDERSON to publish the same in a durable form; that we will assist, as far as our ability will permit, in its extensive circulation; and that a committee of three be appointed to obtain subscribers to the work."

Salem Baptist Association.

"*Resolved*, That this Association regards the recent discussion in the 'South Western Baptist,' between Rev. SAMUEL HENDERSON and Rev. Mr. HAMILL, on the subject of *Methodist Episcopacy*, as peculiarly interesting to the Baptist denomination, and as calculated to enlighten the people on that subject.

"*Resolved*, that we recommend the publication of said discussion in a more durable form.

"*Resolved*, That we appoint a committee of three to correspond with Brother HENDERSON on the subject of its publication, and to solicit subscriptions for the work."

Judson Baptist Association.

"2. *Resolved*, That the editor of the 'S. W. Baptist,' be requested to publish the discussion above alluded to in book form, at as early a day as will suit his convenience."

Were it necessary, similar extracts from the Minutes of many other Associations could be made. We must add, however, that the BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF FLORIDA, at its recent session, passed resolutions, "joining in the request of the various Associations in Alabama," urging its publication. We would insert these resolutions, but the Minutes of that body are not in our possession.

Oak Bowery Quarterly Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"Whereas, a discussion has been going on for some time, in the columns of the 'South Western Baptist,' between the Rev. E. J. HAMILL and the Rev. SAM'L HENDERSON, upon the question of the Republicanism of Episcopal Methodism; And whereas, we believe its publication in permanent form would greatly promote the cause of truth—would commend the beautiful Church polity of Methodism to the admiration of the candid—and would effectually silence the unjust and groundless clamor against the Republicanism of Methodism, now heard from certain quarters: And whereas, the spirit of charity permeating the discussion on both sides, as a noble example of the Christian forbearance we should exhibit toward our opponents; therefore,

Resolved, By the members of the Fourth Quarterly Conference, Oak Bowery Circuit, Alabama Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, that we do concur with the Quarterly Conference of the Tuskegee Station, Alabama Conference, in recommending the publication of the aforesaid discussion, and in the adoption of such measures as will secure the same.

"SAM'L ARMSTRONG, P. E.

"JONATHAN WARE, Sec'y.

Similar resolutions were passed by the Tuskegee Circuit, Alabama Conference.

P. R. APPLEBY, Sec'y.

The pastor of the Methodist Church desires it to be remembered, that the discussion was conducted in a Baptist journal, and was therefore, known to but few of his Methodist brethren. And, moreover, his ministerial engagements and circumstances over which he had no control, prevented his attendance at any Methodist Annual Conference, and also at any other Quarterly Conference but his own. Nevertheless, in addition to the endorsement of his articles, and the demand for the publication of the discussion by three large and respectable Quarterly Conferences, there are demands and subscriptions for the publication of the work, from prominent members of five other stations and circuits in the Alabama Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

It will be seen that the number, respectability, and earnestness of the foregoing requests, emanating from the two denominations, left the parties no alternative. That the subject discussed is one of vast importance, none will deny. Next to those vital principles in the christian economy, which relate immediately to the salvation of the soul, all will confess that we must place the relations, rights, duties, and privileges of the citizenship of the commonwealth of Israel. And any effort, humble though it may be, which may serve to develope these relations, rights, and privileges, is not unworthy the candid consideration of all right-minded christians. We flatter ourselves that the following pages will not only serve some good purpose, in this respect, but that they will tend to allay the virulence of sectarianism—that moral canker which now so sadly mars the beauty of Zion—and also illustrate a truth which many good men are loth to believe, that religious controversy is not incompatible with the mutual exercise of the candor, forbearance, and charity which should ever adorn the christian character.

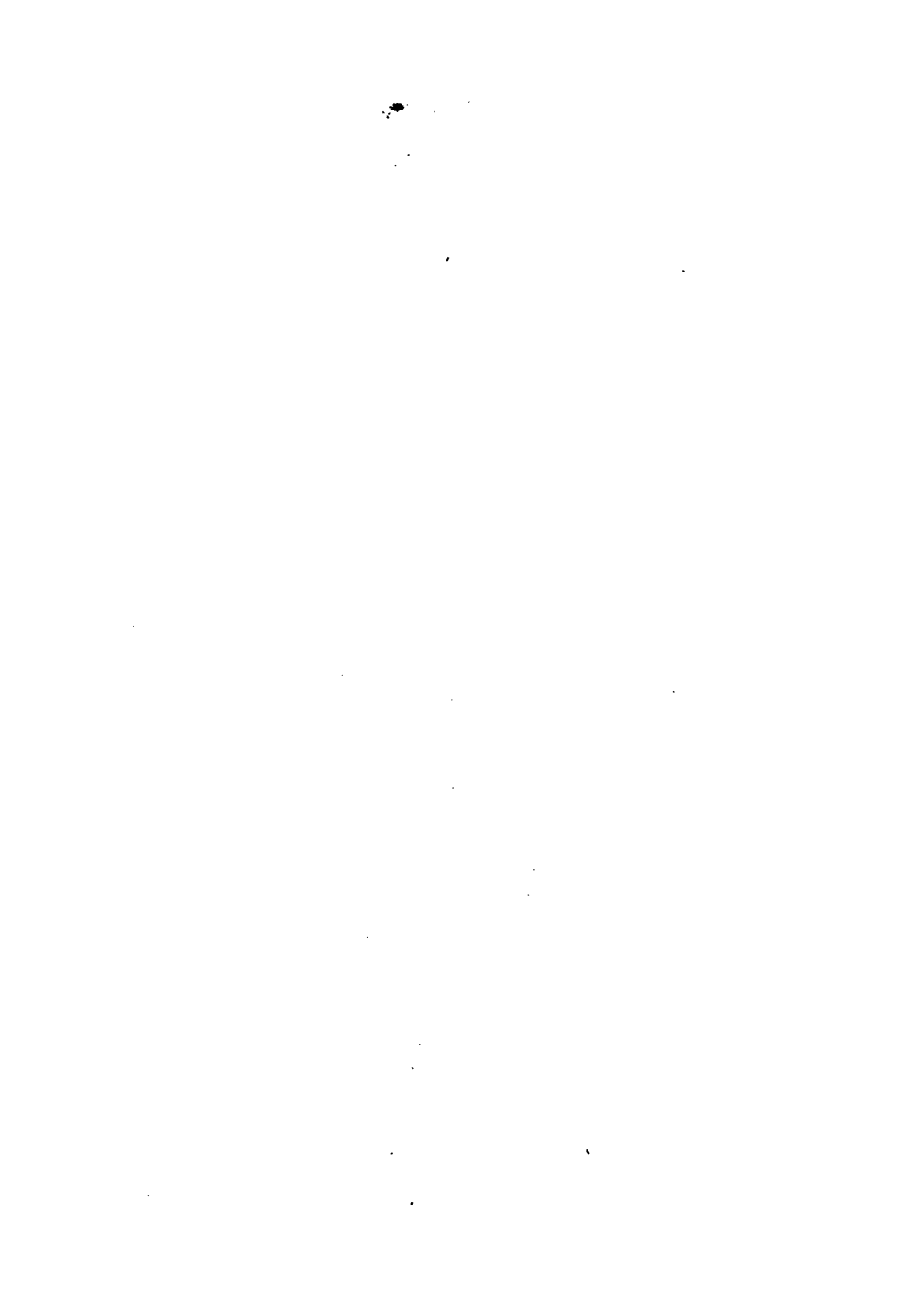
We, therefore, commit this volume to the charitable indulgence of those who have called for its publication, and to the care of **Hm** without whose blessing, all our labors are in vain.

E. J. HAMILL.

S. HENDERSON.

TUSKEGEE, January, 1856.

P. S. We have not felt at liberty to subject our articles to any other revision than a bare correction of typographical errors.



DISCUSSION.



METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

From the Western Watchman.

EPISCOPAL METHODISM—ANTI-AMERICAN.

"We are no Republicans, and never intend to be."—J. WESLEY.

EPISCOPAL METHODISM IS ANTI-AMERICAN IN ITS SPIRIT AND TENDENCY, AND A DANGEROUS FOE TO REPUBLICANISM.

1. *Episcopal Methodism was anti-American in its origin in this country.*—In 1784, three regularly ordained clergymen were sent over from England to this country, one of whom had been ordained a bishop. This bishop ordained one Francis Asbury as the bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.* The first General Conference was held in Baltimore, 1784. This Conference determined that the government of the Methodist Church should be Episcopal—that is, a government of bishops. Those who composed this Conference were ministers, and only ministers, though there were then in the Me-

* Discipline. Part I, chap. i, sec. 1.

thodist societies in the United States, 14,988 members! Now, here we find that the people were never consulted at the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church—they had no representatives present. But a few ministers of themselves framed the government without the consent of the people, and have held all legislative, judicial, and executive prerogatives under their own control ever since. By virtue of this usurped authority, this body has imposed upon the people articles of faith, without either their advice or consent, and thus has violated the free exercise of conscience and the right of private judgment on the part of the laity, in respect to matters with which their personal salvation is inseparably connected. What more has the Papacy done in controlling the faith of its adherents? Now, let any one compare the above statement with the Declaration of Rights adopted by the Continental Congress, October 14, 1774,* and he will find that the very acts of despotism of which our ancestors complained, and which led to the adoption of our glorious Declaration of Independence, were perpetrated by these originators of Methodist Episcopacy in the United States. Americanism recognizes the right of the people to frame their own government. Episcopal Methodism violated this right in its origin. It is, therefore, anti-American in its origin.

2. Episcopal Methodism is anti-American in the support it gives to this unwarranted assumption of power.

* Declaration of Rights.—“*Resolved*, 4. That the foundation of English liberty, and of all free government, is a right in the people to participate in their legislative council.”

The laws of the Methodist Episcopal Church are made by the General Conference. The General Conference is composed of travelling preachers. The members of the General Conference are appointed by the Annual Conferences—the Annual Conferences are composed exclusively of travelling preachers. No one can be elected a member of the General Conference but a travelling preacher. No one can vote for members of the General Conference but travelling preachers.* The people have no representatives in the law-making department; the General Conference controls the entire Church, both in its faith and practice, and thus destroys the very foundation of all religious liberty, and provides a basis for the most absolute despotism. Is not this anti-American?

Again: the bishops are appointed by the travelling preachers. They hold their office during life, unless removed for crime. The destiny of all the itinerant preachers is placed in the bishop's hands; from his decision they have no appeal; they must either go to their appointments or cease to be travelling preachers. This places the preachers in a state of dependence on Episcopal power. They can favor or oppress them in giving them good or bad appointments. They can keep them near home, or send them far off. From these circumstances the bishops acquire unlimited power over the preachers and people. Now, let it be remembered that this power is assumed—not delegated by the people; they have no representative—no voice—no vote in the government of the Church or in the election of the

* Discipline. Part I, chap. iii, sec. 2 and 3, ques. 1.

bishops, who are the head of the Church; and yet, by their money and influence, they support this assumed power. Such support is anti-American.

3. Methodist Episcopacy is anti-American, because the assumed power which it supports is frequently exercised in an oppressive manner, and may at all times be so exercised. The bishops possess unlimited power over the preachers and the people. No appeal can be made from the bishop's designation of a preacher to his field of labor. The preacher may not wish to go to the field assigned, and the church may not desire to have the preacher who is sent to them; but there is no appeal. Go he must, and have him the people must, or they are both liable to excommunication from the Methodist Episcopal Church. An instance or two will illustrate this point:

"At the session of the New York Conference, in 1839, it was in some way intimated to the Washington-street Church, in Brooklyn, Long Island, that the Reverend B. Griffin was to be appointed to that charge. The church accordingly, through a committee appointed for the purpose, presented itself before the bishop and remonstrated against Mr. Griffin's being sent to them as their pastor. But the remonstrance was disregarded, and Mr. Griffin was stationed at Washington-street."

"At the session of the New England Conference, in 1841, both of the large societies in Lowell, Mass., petitioned for particular preachers; but they were told that they should not have the men they asked for. One of the churches (St. Paul's) then requested to be left without a supply by the bishop—having made arrangements to employ a local preacher. But the bishop regarded

not the request, but forced a preacher upon them. In both these cases the preachers petitioned for also added their request to the voice of the churches; so that the wishes of both preachers and people were disregarded.

"The other church, after being denied the preacher they wanted, selected some four or five others, and stated to the bishop that they would be satisfied with either of them. But no; they must not have either; and, to cap the climax of insult, the very man was sent them to whom they had objected. In consequence of rejecting their preachers and electing others, they were publicly declared to be without the pale of the Church. This alarming step of excommunicating whole churches without the form of a trial, develops another of the anti-American features of Episcopal Methodism—especially when it is considered that the subject was carried up to the bishop, and he approved of it, and pronounced it Methodism."*

I might multiply instances of this kind, but the limits of this tract will not permit. The simple fact, that the power thus assumed by Methodist bishops, and countenanced and supported by the Episcopal Church, may, at any time, be exercised oppressively, is sufficient to prove that this system is anti-American; for Americanism makes no provision for the exercise of oppression, but constantly guards against the abuse even of delegated power. Episcopal Methodism, on the contrary, countenances and supports the oppressive exercise of assumed power. It is, therefore, anti-American.

4. Episcopal Methodism is anti-American in its direct

* "Book for the Times," pp. 114-116.

tendency to suppress freedom of speech and of the press. That this is its tendency, no one acquainted with the system can consistently deny. Let a number of members of an Episcopal Methodist Society express their conviction that the government of their Church might be bettered,—let them print their views and circulate their opinions, and excommunication is the penalty at once—either for orally discussing the matter, or printing their views. Suppose the press was under the control of Episcopal Methodism, it could not utter a sentiment at variance with the “Discipline” without being placed under interdict. A Methodist preacher cannot, dare not publish a book that shall encourage free inquiry into Episcopacy, or that will induce discussion of its merits, without the fear of exclusion.* Now, how does Rome prevent the freedom of the press where she has not political power? By this bugbear of excommunication. Place the free press of America under the control of Methodist Episcopal bishops, and there could be no free discussion—Republicanism would be strangled and the car of liberty rolled backward. The Methodist Episcopal press now is under the control of the bishops; the editors of all the papers, magazines, books, tracts, &c., are appointed by the Conference, with the approbation of the presiding bishop.

* Discipline. Part III, chap. vi., sec. 21.—“Any travelling preacher who may publish any work or book of his own, shall be responsible to his conference for any obnoxious matter or doctrine therein contained.” Compare these facts with the following, in the Declaration of Rights.—“*Resolved*, That the people have a right peaceably to assemble, consider of their grievances, and petition the king; and that all prosecution, prohibitory proclamations, and commitments for the same are illegal.”

If I am an American I must forget it in becoming an Episcopal Methodist. If I love Republicanism, I must not express my preference for it in the government of the Church of which I am a member. Freedom of speech is denied me on pain of exclusion. To speak of Republicanism in Church government is to "sow dissension," and that is to be punished with excommunication. Americanism encourages freedom of speech; Episcopal Methodism suppresses it; it is, therefore, anti-American.

5. Episcopal Methodism is anti-American in supporting the assumption of temporal power by its bishops. Why is it that we fear Romanism? Not simply because the votaries of the pope yield assent to the ridiculous superstitions of their debasing religion; not simply because their priests and bishops exercise oppressively an assumed power. This last feature is anti-American in Romanism as well as Episcopal Methodism; but this does not trouble us. If Romanists or Methodists choose to degrade themselves by submission to priests or bishops, and voluntarily sacrifice that liberty, which, as freemen, they have a right to enjoy, it is their own fault. But the supporting of assumptions to temporal power is just cause of alarm. The effort of Romish bishops to gain the control of all the Catholic Church property, has been loudly decried, and some noble instances have occurred where even Roman Catholic congregations have determined, in the exercise of their freedom as American citizens, to resist these arrogant demands. But it seems to be forgotten that Episcopal Methodist bishops make the same demand, and this demand is submitted to without a murmur, by American Methodists. Who hold the deeds for every inch of

ground and every Episcopal Methodist Church in the land?—The Conference, *alias* the bishops. Where is the Methodist Episcopal congregation that has dared to follow the example of the Roman Catholic congregations above alluded to, in opposing this arrogant assumption of temporal power? Let Americans in the Episcopal Methodist Church blush to be told that, with all their boasted intelligence and freedom, they fear excommunication from their bishops more than Roman Catholics feared the pope's nuncio, or the bulls of Pio Nono himself.

A vast amount of property is thus held under the control of Methodist bishops. A lay member of the Church has no voice in the disposition of funds which he himself aided to raise. The preachers can dispose of it only by suggesting the way in which it may be appropriated. The bishops control it, and may designate it as they see fit.

Now, is there no danger to American liberty from a hierarchy possessing such ample pecuniary resources as these? Are the bishops of the Episcopal Methodist Church so immaculately pure as to be beyond the reach of selfish and sectarian preferences?—May the time not arrive when they will consider it to be their duty to use their vast influence and assumed power in politics?—May they not conclude that they will be doing God service by using their influence to induce political action which will favor Episcopal Methodism? The support which they see the lay members of their Churches giving to their assumptions of temporal as well as spiritual power, has a direct tendency to encourage them to exercise that power in controlling the affairs of State for

their own advancement, and so as to secure the continuance of their power unmolested. The man who can see and feel it right to exercise a bishop's office in the Episcopal Methodist Church, can scarcely see it wrong to exercise a monarch's office in the State; for both are alike, and equally anti-American. This leads me to the second member of my proposition, viz:

EPISCOPAL METHODISM IS A DANGEROUS FOE TO REPUBLICANISM.

I have shown beyond dispute, that it is an ecclesiastical despotism. Any one who will carefully examine the system, will perceive that Republicanism and Episcopal Methodism are perfectly antagonistic. Republicanism admits and insists on the right of the people to frame the government under which they are to live; but Episcopal Methodism acknowledges no such right. Republicanism provides for the correction of abuses in administering government, by the frequent election of law-makers by the voice of the people. Episcopal Methodism places it beyond the power of the people to change their law-makers, however oppressive their enactments may be. Republicanism provides also for the election, by the people, of executive and judicial officers; Episcopal Methodism assumes these powers without consulting the people. In a Republic, the public moneys and public buildings are under the supervision of the sovereign people; but in the Methodist Episcopal Church, these are controlled by the bishops. In a Republic, the people choose their own public servants; but Episcopal Methodism forces on the people such teachers as the bishop may choose to send them.

I might go on and indefinitely exhibit the features of antagonism between the two. But will not these suffice for any unprejudiced, independent American? Can it be possible, then, that the influence of this anti-American hierarchy can be anything but injurious to Republicanism? In ecclesiastical matters, the laity are but the tools of the bishops and priests—they may become so in political matters. It is a well known fact, developed in the history of the world, that religious liberty must precede civil liberty; and it is no less true that an ecclesiastical despotism will, sooner or later, if permitted to exert its influence unchecked, beget political despotism.

This is the direct tendency of Episcopal Methodism—for if despotism be right in the Church it is right in the State—if it be wrong in the State it is wrong in the Church. But Episcopal Methodism declares it to be right in the Church; it must, therefore, encourage it in the State. So far as the influence of Episcopal Methodism extends, so far the true spirit of freedom is crushed, and our Republicanism is endangered.

But again: the very organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church is dangerous to the liberties of a free people. Suppose a crisis to arrive in political action, in which the hierarchy of the Methodist Church is interested. From the dependence of all the parts on one great central power, it is easy to perceive how the suffrages of most of the members may be controlled by the bishops. Let the bishop suggest to the presiding elders that the interests of their ecclesiastical despotism will be subserved by the election of a certain set of men to office; the presiding elders use their influence over the preachers, the preachers over the class-leaders, and

the class-leaders over their class-members, and thus the balance of power in a political contest may rest in the hands of seven Episcopal Methodist bishops. There is as much danger of this, as there is of Romanism accomplishing a similar result, provided the occasion requires it. It may be said that the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church are too independent to be thus influenced; but while they submit to the degradation to which I have shown they are subjected in Church matters, let them not speak of independence in political matters. Let them become ecclesiastically free, and then it may be hoped that they would dare to become politically free, if the bishop undertook to prevent it.

I have thus briefly shown that Episcopal Methodism is anti-American in its spirit and tendency, and that it is a dangerous foe to Republicanism. I have shown that it had its origin in usurpation; that its very organization provides for the support and extension of assumed power, and that this power may be oppressively exercised without restriction. I have shown that Methodist Episcopacy contains in itself the very elements of an absolute despotism, and therefore must ultimately, unless checked, subvert and destroy our Republican institutions. In doing this, I have uttered no harsh epithets; I have insinuated nothing against the scripturalness of Methodist doctrines, or the piety and godliness of Methodist Church members. I have simply spoken as an American citizen, and I call on every true American in the Methodist Episcopal Church to use his influence to effect a radical reform in this matter. The time has come when Americanism and Romanism are arrayed in hostile attitudes. Remember

that you are not prepared to stand by Americanism while you are the subjects of a hierarchy. The taunt will come with irresistible force from the vassals of the pope: "Is despotism any more sinful or dangerous in the Romish Church than in the Methodist?" Oh! then, be Americans—be freemen—throw off your ecclesiastical chains, and then you will be prepared consistently to aid your fellow countrymen in breaking the yoke of ecclesiastical despotism with which Rome has bound her ignorant and degraded subjects!

April 19th, 1855.

LETTER I.

EPISCOPAL METHODISM NOT ANTI-AMERICAN.

Wesley's loyalty; Methodists love their doctrines; General Conference cannot change doctrines; Ministers called of God, and sent out by His people; Two orders in the ministry; Bishop Hamline's resignation; Apostolic itinerancy; Lay delegation; Peculiar institution; A bishop has no vote; Members tried by their Societies; Freedom of Opinion; Appointing power of bishops exercised wisely; Bishops hold no Church property; Morbid imagination.

REV. MESSRS. HENDERSON AND WATT:

Dear Sirs: I find in your paper of the 19th April, an article with the caption, "Episcopal Methodism—anti-American," taken from the "Western Watchman," reflecting severely upon the Church polity of Methodism. I should not deem the article worthy of a reply, but for its serious publication in so respectable a journal as the South Western Baptist.

I shall offer no comment upon the presumption or malignity, which could venture to misrepresent so grossly, the Church government and patriotism of the largest body of Christians in the United States, but shall briefly state the theory of Methodism, upon the points in question.

And first,—It is true that John Wesley, the Methodist, as well as Rev. Thomas Chalmers, the Presbyterian, and

that you are not prepared to stand by Americanism while you are the subjects of a hierarchy. The taunt will come with irresistible force from the vassals of the pope: "Is despotism any more sinful or dangerous in the Romish Church than in the Methodist?" Oh! then, be Americans—be freemen—throw off your ecclesiastical chains, and then you will be prepared consistently to aid your fellow countrymen in breaking the yoke of ecclesiastical despotism with which Rome has bound her ignorant and degraded subjects!

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Bishop Hamline, of the Northern Methodist Church, a man of the purest character, voluntarily resigned his Episcopacy, and is now acting simply as a Methodist Presbyter. Hence, our Episcopacy is a mere superintendency or presidency; a kind of permanent moderatorship.

Sixthly,—We believe that the distribution of our ministers to their several fields of labor, upon the itinerant plan, is the best mode of imitating the Apostles, who went from city to city—a mode admirably adapted to spread scriptural holiness through the lands—and we also think that this distribution of the ministers, and the laws regulating this itinerancy, should be made with a conscientious regard for the well-being of the whole Church, but, by those only who submit to the sacrifices of the itinerancy, and upon whom these laws mainly operate, namely, the ministry; nevertheless, in all other enterprises, financial or otherwise, in which the laity are equally concerned with the ministry, we admit lay delegation; for instance, in the commission to locate the contemplated Male College of the Alabama Conference, to meet in Summerfield next July, we have two lay delegates for one ministerial delegate. We have also in our Conferences, joint Boards of Finance, composed equally of laymen and ministers.

Seventhly,—We have an institution, peculiar to Methodism, which places all ranks of our ministry upon the same platform; that is, all, from the lowest to the highest, have to pass through a periodical examination of character. At our General Conferences, a Committee on Episcopacy, composed of the very men over whom the bishops preside in their several Annual Conferences,

review the entire judicial acts and personal character of all our bishops; they summon the bishops before their bar at pleasure, and freely censure or approve, as seemeth good in their sight. It will not be forgotten by the Southern people, that it was a too free exercise of this power over the bishops, in the case of the excellent bishop J. O. Andrew, on account of his connection with slavery, which divided our Church into the two great branches, Northern and Southern.

Eighthly,—There is but a single officer in our Church who is denied the privilege of voting in any and all of our Church Courts, and that is a bishop, who has not even the casting vote in our General or Annual Conferences, or in any other Church body.

Ninthly,—No member in our Church can be tried or expelled by any minister, or body of ministers, but only by a jury of his peers—the members of the society to which he belongs.

Tenthly,—The charge that “freedom of speech upon Church matters, is interdicted upon pain of exclusion,” the facts in the case will show to be utterly groundless. It is true, we would allow no man to promulge Unitarianism and Universalism, and still retain his membership with us. For any evangelical denomination to suffer this, would be to abandon Christianity; but upon the minor questions, which may naturally arise among those who have adopted the same faith and practice, the freest expression of sentiment is indulged without blame.

The free discussion in the General Conference of 1844, upon the question whether or not the Conference could suspend Bishop Andrew, without the least charge

against his moral character, which was really done, and the proposition introduced by Dr. Smith, of Virginia, into the General Conference of 1850, at St. Louis, to remodel our whole General Conference system, so as to have two houses instead of one, and in a form analagous to the House of Representatives and Senate of the United States; these facts, with the abundant memorials sent up to every General Conference, are ample testimony that the widest latitude of opinion is enjoyed by our entire membership, without censure. I may also add, in contradiction to a reckless statement of the writer in question, that the editors of all our papers, magazines, books, tracts, etc., are elected by the General Conference, whether from the ranks of the itinerancy or from other departments, as they please, and without the slightest reference to the wish of the bishops. Dr. Bond, the editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, in New York, is not a member of any Annual Conference whatever.

Eleventh,—Of the charge that the power of the bishop, with the aid and advice of the presiding elders, to make appointments, “is frequently exercised in an oppressive manner,” I remark, if the writer had said, that those who are voluntarily subject to this power are not unfrequently called to make sacrifices, in going to the mountains and swamps, and frontier wilds, to preach the gospel to every creature, this is unquestionably true; but that the acts of these honored men of God, are ever intentionally oppressive, is incredible. It is reasonable to assume, that these men desire, at least, to promote the interests of Methodism, and will therefore use that power, which they hold under strict responsibility, to

review the entire judicial acts and personal character of all our bishops; they summon the bishops before their bar at pleasure, and freely censure or approve, as seemeth good in their sight. It will not be forgotten by the Southern people, that it was a too free exercise of this power over the bishops, in the case of the excellent bishop J. O. Andrew, on account of his connection with slavery, which divided our Church into the two great branches, Northern and Southern.

Eighthly,—There is but a single officer in our Church who is denied the privilege of voting in any and all of our Church Courts, and that is a bishop, who has not even the casting vote in our General or Annual Conferences, or in any other Church body.

Ninthly,—No member in our Church can be tried or expelled by any minister, or body of ministers, but only by a jury of his peers—the members of the society to which he belongs.

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accomplish this design, and not to defeat it by glaring oppression. Can it be possible, then, that such men would adopt the suicidal policy with which they are charged? No! it were impossible, except they were destitute not only of moral character but of reason also.

Twelfth,—The charge that "Methodists degrade themselves by submission to bishops, and that no Methodist congregation has dared to follow the example of some Roman Catholic congregations, in opposing the demand of our bishops to control all the Methodist Church property, moneys, and buildings;" this is a charge so utterly astounding to me, that I almost feel wanting in self-respect to formally deny it. But, as Solomon says—"answer a fool according to his folly."—I therefore say that our bishops have not a solitary cent's worth of interest in our entire Church property. Let any one look at the deeds of the Methodist Church in Tuskegee, and of the new Methodist College erecting in our town. The proof is at hand.

Lastly,—It is charged "That the balance of power, in a political contest, may rest in the hands of seven Methodist bishops; they may suggest to the presiding elders, these may exercise their influence over the preachers, these again over the class-leaders, and these last over the class members;" thus "the suffrages of most of the members may be *controlled* by the bishops, for the election of a certain set of men to office," and therefore, "Methodist Episcopacy must ultimately, unless checked, destroy our Republican institutions."

This accusation is in full proof that the writer of the article you have copied from the Watchman, is a man of wonderfully creative imagination. DeQuincy's Opium

Eater never saw horrid images come trooping more rapidly before his fancy. He should be classed with the most inventive of the poets, but for his hypochondriacism—a little medical treatment would be of service to him. May he live forever! But poetry aside; to affirm that I, for instance, could control the votes of such men as David Clopton, Judge Dougherty, J. B. Bilbro, and Wm. H. Stafford; and that these in turn can influence the votes of such class-members as J. W. Willis, Robt. F. Ligon, James A. Smith, J. D. Porter, and other Methodists; to affirm this, I say, is about as generous as just, and as true, as it would be solemnly to assert that the Rev. Samuel Henderson can control at his pleasure, the votes of such Baptists as Chief Justice Chilton, Chancellor Mason, Dr. Battle, and others. I confess, Messrs. Editors, with these facts before me, which I stand ever ready to defend, I was not a little surprised that the article thus reviewed, should have been admitted into the columns of the South Western Baptist. As an act of justice to your fellow citizens, I respectfully ask the publication of this article in your paper.

Respectfully yours, &c.

E. J. HAMILL,

Pastor of the M. E. Church, Tuskegee, Ala.

May 3d, 1855.

We, the undersigned, respectfully request the publication of the foregoing in the South Western Baptist.

ROBERT L. MAYS,
JOHN B. BILBRO,
DAVID CLOPTON.

REPLY TO LETTER I.

Courtesy Extended; Two enquiries; Great names do not change Error into Truth; The power of a religious theory true or false, in the formation of character; Our POSITION DEFINED; Lexicographical definition of terms; Application of these definitions to the subject in debate; Annual and General Conferences composed only of bishops and travelling preachers; Exclusion of laymen from these bodies; The clergy the basis of representation; Episcopacy never to be changed; An effort to change it rebuked; The legislative, executive and judicial departments of government all filled exclusively by the clergy; Dr. Bascom's opinion; Methodist Episcopacy deprives laymen of the right of choosing their own pastors; Anecdotes of Dr. Rippon and Robert Hall; The argumentum ad hominem; Extent of our endorsement of the article from the Western Watchman.

It always affords us pleasure to open our columns to any person or community to vindicate themselves from intentional or unintentional misrepresentation. The article to which the foregoing communication refers, purports to have been written by an American citizen. It is assumed that he has most grossly, wantonly, and malignantly assailed the Methodist Episcopal Church. Far be it from us to be the means of circulating presumptuous and malignant misrepresentations "of the largest body of Christians in the United States." We can assure our good brother Hamill, that, welcome as he is to our columns, he would have been still more wel-

come, had he not appended the endorsement to his communication, of the three very respectable names, to secure its publication. Highly as we respect these gentlemen, all of whom are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we beg leave to assure them that their honored pastor is always welcome to our columns *without any endorsement*. We hope, therefore, that he will never again submit our mutual respect for each other to such an unnecessary implication.

It is not our purpose to answer in detail the thirteen points embraced in Brother Hamill's communication, as it would introduce a range of discussion too extensive for a single article. And, moreover, we are content that the article from the Watchman, and the present one, shall stand or fall on their own merits. We shall, therefore, confine our remarks to two very simple enquiries; these are—

First,—Is the Episcopal feature of the Methodist Church a legitimate subject of newspaper discussion?

Secondly,—Is Church polity, as an element in the formation of political character, of sufficient importance to merit the attention of the politician and statesman?

And let it be distinctly premised here, that it is not the piety, or even the doctrines of the Methodist Church that we are now to discuss. No Protestant recognizes the scraphic piety and the evangelical doctrines of a Fenelon and a Bossuet in mitigation of the tyranny and crimes of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Our remarks will be confined to the isolated topic of Episcopacy. The most illustrious names of this, or any other age, never converted one error into a truth. And he who expects to shield an error behind the prestige of great and

good names, no matter if they are as numerous as the stars of heaven, has sadly mistaken the age in which he lives. Whatever of charity we owe to men's persons, it is certain we owe none to their errors. He who compromises a principle out of complaisance to any man or set of men, is unworthy to be trusted, either by God or man. But to our first enquiry:

Is the Episcopal feature of the Methodist Church a legitimate subject for newspaper discussion? Now, we aver that it is; as much so indeed as the ecclesiastical polity of any other denomination on earth. It is a transplant from a foreign to an American soil, and is no more exempted from the ordeal of criticism and serious investigation, than any other article of foreign manufacture. That its type is the Episcopal Church of England, the established religion of that realm, we presume its most devoted friends will not question. It is not sacrilege for an American citizen to question the right of the clergy to rule a constituency numbering nearly a million and a half. But we will not suppose that our Methodist brethren will claim this exemption; and we need not seriously argue it.

We come now to consider the *second* question proposed—Is Church polity, as an element in the formation of political character, of sufficient importance to merit the attention of the politician and statesman? We think that it is. Ever since the days of Constantine, ecclesiastical power has been invoked by secular princes, as an essential element in the government of their subjects. It is at this day recognized by every despot of Europe, not only as an organic law of his government, but as being essential to enforce his authority. It can-

not be denied that religion, whether pure or undefiled, or perverted and corrupted, is the most powerful agency which has ever been brought to bear upon human character. Its unholy and corrupting alliance with every government in Europe, is a recognition of this truth. Even the infidel, Hobbes, defended religion on the ground that it was an essential auxiliary in the hands of kings to rule their subjects. Like the devil and his angels, who lost not their power by the fall, religion loses not its power by being corrupted and perverted to the basest of purposes. The most virulent, merciless, and vindictive persecutions which have ever darkened the pages of Church history, have emanated from a corrupt Christianity. The reason of this is obvious. Religion, based as it is upon the highest authority in the universe, appeals to and develops the strongest principles and passions of the human soul; and these become correspondingly potent for good or for evil, according to the power that directs them. When you appeal to a man's religious prejudices, you appeal to the highest principles and motives that can operate upon moral agents. This, we say, is both objectively and subjectively a necessary truth.

Now, we boldly and fearlessly take the ground, THAT THE EPISCOPACY OF METHODISM IS ANTI-DEMOCRATIC, AND ANTI-REPUBLICAN—THAT IN SO FAR AS ITS OPERATION IS UNRESTRICTED BY MODIFYING AGENCIES, IT IS ESSENTIALLY AND NECESSARILY IN DIRECT ANTAGONISM WITH OUR FREE INSTITUTIONS. We are aware, that in taking this ground, we are subjecting ourselves to much unmerited censure—the censure of those who cannot, or more properly will not, discriminate between persons and principles. We are

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aware that there are those who will regard us as attacking, not a solitary principle in the system of "the largest denomination of Christians in the United States," but as denouncing the entire membership of that denomination as anti-Democratic. But this has no terrors to us. We shall fearlessly speak what we believe to be the truth, be the consequences what they may. We hope to do so, however, in the spirit of the Gospel.

As words are the signs of ideas, the most obvious method we can pursue in this investigation is, in the first place, to ascertain the meaning of terms. Pursuing this course, we turn to our great national standard, Webster's Dictionary, and find the following definitions of the terms involved in this discussion.

"DEMOCRACY, *n.*, government by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is lodged in the hands of the people collectively, or in which the people exercise the powers of legislation."

"REPUBLIC, *n.*, a commonwealth; a state in which the exercise of the sovereign power is lodged in the hands of representatives *elected by the people*," &c.

"EPISCOPACY, *n.*, literally, oversight, or careful inspection; applied particularly to the government of the Church by bishops or prelates."

"EPISCOPAL, *a.*, belonging to, or vested in, bishops or prelates; 2, governed by bishops."

Now, when we assert that the Episcopal feature of the Methodist organization is anti-Democratic and anti-Republican, we are but asserting what every school-boy may know in five minutes by turning to his dictionary—that a form of government in which the supreme power is lodged in the hands of bishops or pre-

lates, the clergy, is in manifest antagonism with that form of government in which such power is lodged in the hands of the people, or of representatives elected by the people. It were absurd to say that two such principles ever can harmonize. If the bill of rights set forth in the preamble of all our civil constitutions, State and National, asserts a truth, that "*all power is inherent in the people,*" then we maintain that a government in which the people have no voice, practically sets that truth at defiance.

Who compose the annual and quadrennial Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church? Let the Discipline answer:—" *Quest.* 3. Who shall attend the yearly Conferences? *Ans.* All travelling preachers in full connection, and those who are to be received into full connection."—p. 23. Again: " *Quest.* Who shall compose the General Conference, and what are the regulations and power belonging to it? *Ans.* 1. The General Conference shall be composed of one member for every twenty-one members of each Annual Conference, to be appointed either by seniority or choice, at the discretion of such Annual Conference: yet so that such representatives shall have travelled at least four full calendar years from the time they were received on trial by an Annual Conference, and are in full connection at the time of holding the Conference."—p. 20. And on page 21, on defining the limitations and restrictions of the powers of a General Conference, the following items occur:—"3. They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, *so as to do away Episcopacy*, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency. 4. They shall not revoke or change the general rules of the

United Societies. 5. They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers, of trial by a committee, and of an appeal; neither shall they do away the privileges of our members, of trial before the society, or by a committee, and of an appeal."

Now, observe, first, that the Annual Conference is composed, *ex officio*, of the clergy under appointment of the bishops in that Conference. Even local preachers, no matter what their piety and talents may be, have no voice in its councils. Observe, secondly, that the basis of representation in a General Conference, is—not the membership of the Church, but the aforesaid clergy in each State. In neither an Annual or General Conference is the voice of a layman or his representative ever heard, unless it be by petition—a right which the most perfect despot will allow his subjects. Observe, thirdly, that this distinct feature of the Methodist Church is never to be changed. The General Conference must not "do away *Episcopacy*." It is recognized as an essential organic law of the system, to do away with which, would dissolve the whole fabric. That is to say, the recognition of the rights of the people, the private members, to a representation in the Annual and General Conferences, would be the death-knell of Methodist Episcopacy! The fathers of this Church have taken the special pains to throw around this special feature of Methodism, the sanctity and power of an irrevocable decree!! Any effort to change it meets with a stern rebuke—such as was administered by the General Conference, in 1824, and in 1828, at which a large and respectable body of ministers were expelled from the body, who subsequently formed the Methodist Protestant Church in the United

States. Call you this Republican Democracy? A numerous and respectable body of ministers and laymen, from different parts of the United States, petition the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church so to modify its basis of representation as to permit the voice of its laymen to be heard in its councils, is rebuked and denounced as schismatical and heretical, and a solemn act of exclusion is pronounced against them! And yet there is nothing in Methodist Episcopacy but what harmonizes most beautifully with American Democracy! And when we quote the very language of the illustrious founder of Methodism, John Wesley,—“We are not Republicans, and never intend to be,”—and when we attempt to point out the features of Methodist polity which antagonize with the genius of our free institutions, why, we have a “wonderfully creative imagination. DeQuincy’s Opium Eater never saw such horric images as came trooping . . . before his fancy. A little medical treatment is” the proper remedy for such distemper! All “poetry” Brother Hamill. It would tax “the most inventive of the poets”—nay, much more inventive than have produced an “Iliad” or a “Paradise Lost,” we opine, to discover the Democracy of Methodist Episcopacy. What an interesting task that would be for an American citizen to sit down to the serious matter of showing that a government by bishops and clergy was perfectly consistent, nay synonymous with government by the people—that a representation based upon the clergy was equivalent to a representation based upon the people, the private membership of the Church—that a legislative body in which the voice of the people is never heard, or if heard, is only heeded as a mat-

ter of grace, is equivalent to a legislative body in which the people collectively exercise the controlling power!

Again: government is divided into three departments—Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. But in neither of these departments are the private members of the Methodist Episcopal Church represented. They have no power either to make, expound, or execute the law. Even if they pronounce the solemn act of exclusion against a member, it is subject to appeal, and may be reversed by the bishop or bishops: and “the word of a” bishop “is the end of all strife.” And that we may not be considered uncharitable in this remark, we make the following extract from the late Bishop Bascom’s “Declaration of the Rights of Man.” Let every Methodist read and ponder it well. If he will not hear the word of a bishop, (written to-be-sure *before* he became a bishop, yet not the less authoritative with *American* readers on that account,) he surely will not be persuaded by an humble Baptist editor. But to the extract:

“ART. 6. A government uniting legislative, judicial, and executive powers in the hands of the same men, is an absurdity in theory, and in practice, tyranny. The executive power, in every government, should be subordinate to the legislative, and the judicial independent of both. Whenever, therefore, it happens that these three departments of government are in the hands of the same body of men, and these men not the representatives of the people—first making the laws, then executing them, and finally the sole judges of their own acts, there is no liberty; the people are virtually enslaved, and liable to be ruined at any time. In a government, civil or ecclesiastical, where the same men are legislators, administrators, and judges, in relation to all the laws, and every possible application of them, the people,

whether well or ill treated, are in fact slaves; for the only remedy against such a despotism is revolt. No constitution can be presumed a good one, embodying the principles of correct government, which does not sufficiently guard against the chances and possibility of mal-administration. All absolute governments owe their character to the manner in which they are administered; whereas, in a representative government, with proper checks and balances, it is the interest, even of the vicious, to promote the general welfare, by conforming to the laws. The greater the equality established among men by governments, the more virtue and happiness will prevail; *for where the voluntary consent of the governed is the basis of government, interest and duty combine to promote the common weal.*"

Finally. Methodist Episcopacy deprives the membership of that Church of the right of choosing their own pastors—a right as dear to the Lord's "freed men" as any with which they are invested in the New Testament. The Churches sometimes petition the bishop for some particular person of their choice, but how often are their wishes disregarded! We recollect some year or two since, of reading in one of the regular journals of the Methodist Episcopal Church, some serious articles against the policy of yielding to this, the most humble method of expressing a wish, in which the ground was taken, if we remember correctly, that if the thing was not stopped, it would virtually "do away with Episcopacy." And yet we are called upon to believe—nay, we are considered very uncharitable and bigoted if we will not believe—that a church organization in which the right of the laity to choose their own pastors—those who are to break to them the bread of eternal life, and who are to be supported by their money, and assisted

by their prayers and sympathies—is absolutely denied, is, nevertheless, quite consistent with American Democracy!

But, says Brother Hamill, "John Wesley, the Methodist, Thomas Chalmers, the Presbyterian, and Robert Hall, the Baptist were good subjects of the English monarchy." True, they were; they were mindful of the Divine injunction, "fear God and honor the king." But is not Brother Hamill aware that the form of Church Government recognized by Hall, was as pure a Democracy as that recognized by Baptist Churches, even in the United States—and that it has been mainly through the agencies of such men as Robert Hall, and the Independents of England, that the act of non-conformity was extorted from the British crown, conferring the right to worship God according to the dictates of one's own conscience! And let it never be forgotten that, in our struggle for independence, the Baptists and Independents of Great Britain were universally on our side. Dr. Rippon, pastor of a Baptist Church in London, writing to Dr. Baldwin, pastor of a Baptist Church in Boston, during the Revolutionary war, says to him—"When the king's armies prevail, there is the cry of mourning, lamentation and woe amongst us; but when the American army prevails, there is the shout of kings in our camps." Robert Hall, the father of the distinguished orator, and one of the most eloquent Baptist ministers of his age, was an open and avowed friend of the Colonies. The following anecdote of him and Dr. Ryland, is worth relating:

"One evening our conversation turned on the subject of the war with America, previously to the acknowledg-

ment of the Independence of the United States. Mr. Hall said 'Sir, that war was very unpopular, and considered to be very unrighteous by men of true liberty principles. My father, sir, warmly advocated the American cause. When I was a little boy, he took me to the school of Mr. Ryland, at Northampton, the father of Dr. Ryland, of Bristol; this Mr. Ryland was very eccentric, and a violent partizan of the Americans; it was in the hottest period of the war, sir, and many persons were very indignant at the conduct of the English Government. That war, sir, was considered as a crusade against the liberty of the subject and the rights of man. The first night we arrived at Northampton, from Arnsby, sir, the two old gentlemen (my father and Mr. Ryland) talked over American politics until they both became heated, on the same side of the question. At length Mr. Ryland burst forth in this manner: 'Brother Hall, I will tell you what I would do if I were General Washington.' 'Well,' said my father, 'what would you do?' 'Why, Brother Hall, if I were General Washington, I would summon all the American officers; they should form a circle around me, and I would address them, and we would offer a libation in our own blood, and I would order one of them to bring a lancet and a punch-bowl; and he should bleed us all, one by one, into this punch-bowl; and I would be the first to bare my arm; and when the punch-bowl was full, and we had all been bled, I would call upon every man to consecrate himself to the work, by dipping his sword into the bowl, and entering into a solemn covenant engagement by oath, one to another, and would swear by *Him that sits upon the throne and liveth forever and ever*, that we would never sheath our swords while there was an English soldier in arms remaining in America; and this is what I would do, Brother Hall.'—*Greene's Reminiscences of Robert Hall*, pp. 48, 49.

But we must conclude. Brother Hamill seems to consider that it is quite Democratic that the trusteeship

and location of Colleges should be placed in the hands of a majority of laymen. Pardon us, Brother Hamill, if we say this has nothing to do with the subject. We are discussing the power of the bishops and clergy over Churches, not Colleges. The privilege of locating a College, or of being a trustee of it when located, has about as much to do with the Episcopal government of your Church, as the appointment of a servant to supply your Annual Conference with water. The Methodist Episcopal Church was no more organized to erect Colleges than any other Church. The subject of education in that, as in all other denominations, is an appendage, and enters not into its organic features.

Let us not be misunderstood or misrepresented. The question is not whether Brother Hamill or ourself could control the votes of such men as he names in his communication. This is an *argumentum ad hominem*, a mode of argument usually resorted to for the want of a better; but the question is, whether a civil government, organized upon the principles of Methodist Episcopacy, could be called with propriety a Democratic Republican Government? We say it could not. How far we have proved this, is left to the candid reader.

As to the article to which Brother Hamill replies, as copied from the Watchman into our paper;—it contained matter proper to be published. It does not follow that editors are considered as endorsing all the sentiments contained in every article copied into their paper. Nor is it incumbent on them to sift and criticise each argument which such selections may contain. So far as the article in question favors an assault upon Methodist Episcopacy at the ballot box, we repudiate it, for in

voting, we never inquire as to what church a man belongs; but whether he is honest and capable, and whether his views upon important political questions correspond with our own. With respect, however, to the position, which is the leading idea contained in the article, and which we have above discussed, we believe it to be true, and can maintain it.

LETTER II.

METHODIST EPISCOPACY NOT ANTI-REPUBLICAN.

Christian discussion profitable; Foreign topics; The Bible and its Episcopacy a foreign importation; Mormon the only system of religion of American origin; Mistakes corrected; The advantages of Itineracy; The Democratic principle acknowledged, that none should make laws but those who are subject to them; Itinerants made such by the people; Itinerants constitute their officers like legislatures; Power of the General Conference over bishops; Four points in which Church government should be unlike civil government; Methodist Church government bear a proper analogy to our Federal government; Fancy sketch of the youth, Bascom; Anecdote; Paul's definition of *Episcopos*; The Baptist discipline; Government it describes unlike our civil government; A sad picture; An *un*-Republican feature; Robert Hall's view of close communion.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."—PROVERBS.

DEAR BROTHER HENDERSON:

I thank you for your kind regard, and hope the fraternal feelings cherished for each other, for many years, will not suffer abatement in our discussion. The endorsement of my article by my brethren, was proper,

because the writer reviewed by me had attempted to degrade them politically. In the present case it is unnecessary, and unendorsed. I cordially accept the invitation you have freely accorded me, to a place in your columns. Discussion, conducted upon righteous principles, is always profitable. Paul disputed daily in the school of one Tyrannus, and this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord—a truly blessed result. And so it has ever been, wherever truth has greatly extended her conquests over the human mind, she has found in controversy a powerful auxiliary. Hence we are of the same mind upon your first proposition, that the Episcopacy of Methodism is a legitimate subject for newspaper discussion—especially with a magnanimous opponent. The entire system of Methodist doctrines and principles, invites investigation; it shuns no scrutiny; discussion, whether oral or written, but unfolds its wisdom and its beauty. As you do not controvert the thirteen points in my communication, except as they bear upon the new issue you make, and as you repudiate the slanderous article, from the "Watchman," in all points save that contained in your proposition, I have done with the anonymous slanderer, and cheerfully accept debate on your terms, and contend that "The Episcopacy of Methodism is not anti-Republican." To give your entire communication a respectful notice, I will, first, dispose of some thoughts in your piece not important to the controversy, and correct some mistakes into which you have inadvertently fallen.

You have given us dissertations upon the facts—that great names do not excuse or sanctify errors—that ec-

clesiastical power has been invoked by princes since the days of Constantine, and that religious opinions, whether true or false, are wonderfully potent in their influence upon the human soul. These are certainly truths; and I will not presume to dictate to you what amount of elegant dissertations upon foreign topics you may interweave into this debate. My duty is, to look only to what bears upon the point in question. If our Episcopal feature were, as you say, a transplant from a foreign soil, it were no less worthy of acceptance on that account; for our Bible is a foreign importation. Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, Paul and John, were Hebrews. I know of no system of religion of American origin but Mormonism, and I am sure you have no love for that, though it does baptize by immersion, and denounce infant baptism.

Suffer me now to correct the mistakes adverted to. You say "the Episcopal Church of England is the type of the Episcopal feature of the Methodist Church." This is a very great error for a man of your erudition. Your valuable time has been spent in more important matters, perhaps, than the study of Church government, or you would not have made so great a mistake. The standard writers of both Churches will tell you there is an essential difference between the two systems. We hold that the Bible makes but two orders in the ministry—they contend, that without a third order a Church cannot exist. "Powell, on Apostolic Succession," a work which our young ministers are required to study, will give you the particulars. The next mistake I will point out, is of great importance to the question before us. You say, "if private members pronounce the solemn act of exclusion against a member, it is sub-

ject to appeal, and may be reversed by a bishop, and the word of a bishop is the end of all strife." Now, this mistake of yours upon this *very important* point, is pure fiction, wholly groundless. Our whole body of bishops cannot even so much as vote, whether or not the least of our members shall be excluded from or reinstated in our membership. With the slight acquaintance you have with our system, you might easily have believed us anti-Republican or any thing else. A better knowledge of our excellent government will increase your esteem for it. Your onslaught upon our Episcopacy, in ignorance of the first principles of our system, demands that I should call your attention to the proverb—"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."

You think our "Episcopacy deprives our members of the right of choosing their pastors—a right dear to the Lord's freemen." Are you aware that the Wesleyan Methodist Church in England—our much loved mother Church—has no bishops, and yet appoints her ministers upon the itinerant plan, just as we do? And moreover, our Protestant Methodist brethren in our land, have no bishops, and have lay delegations to the fullest possible extent, and they also appoint ministers to their charges, upon the itinerant plan. Your argument is a *non causa pro causa*; you have ascribed that to Episcopacy, which is essential to, and inseparable from, itineracy, whether with or without lay delegation and Episcopacy,—that is, the principle of sending several ministers in succession to the same charge. This itineracy you cannot think anti-Republican, for all branches of Methodism believe it to be the best mode of spreading the

Gospel. It is in imitation of Apostolic itineracy. Paul preached from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum—it secures an efficient ministry, not only for the rich cities, but for the sickly savannas, mountain wilds, and bleak places of the earth—it is after the analogy of nature, in propelling the rich blood, laden with nourishment, to the extremities of the human system—it satisfies the thirst for novelty, inlaid in the very structure of the mind, as a basis for education—and as God has given to one “the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith,” &c., as he has sent out men of divers talents and excellencies, to suit the diverse peculiarities of men; the appointment of these men successively to the same Churches, will make their varied gifts fully available to the edification of the entire membership of the Churches. Your own modesty will admit, I think, that your permanent ministry in a single Church, would be less profitable to that people than a proper succession of labors of such men as yourself and Brothers Tichenor, and DeVotie. And I know that the high appreciation of your character abroad, creates a strong probability, that if you were sent upon an itinerant plan, say to Montgomery and Marion, your labors would be more richly blessed. Thus both ministers and members would be blessed by the operation of this Scriptural plan, and many secret griefs and mortifications, such as are described in “the Shady side,” would be escaped.

In this excellent plan of itinerancy, lies the philosophy of our whole system—it is the key-stone of the arch—take it away and many parts of our system are superfluous. We would then have no need for our annual

examinations of character, and for the reception of ministers into the travelling connection, and much else appertaining to the business of an Annual Conference would cease to be. And strange as it may seem to you, in all the business left to an Annual Conference, were the itineracy abolished—such as attention to Missionary and Sunday Schools, and Tract Societies and Colleges, in all these, we have lay management, and lay delegation. So that if lay delegation extends not to the control of this distribution of ministers, and to the enactment of laws regulating this distribution, it is because we believe too strongly in the Republican principle, that laws should be made by those only who are subject to them, and not by those on whom they cannot operate. Moreover, in the very constituting of this itinerancy, the representative principle is fully admitted: for all itinerants are made such by two distinct acts of the private membership. First, by granting a license to preach, and secondly, by recommending the preacher for admittance into the travelling connection, without which, there is no admission. This procedure is analogous to a bill, originating in the House of Representatives, and sent to the Senate before it becomes law. If these itinerants thus constituted, then go on and appoint other officers for life, it is analogous to the appointments for life by the President; Heads of departments, and Senate, of Judges, and naval and military officers.

Another item of our economy which you do not understand is this; you know our general conference cannot do away Episcopacy, but you do not know they can almost completely divest the bishops of the appointing power

whenever they see proper. It was once voted so to change it, when bishop Soule was elected, but he refused to accept the office, unless they reconsidered the matter and left it as it was; hence he was not made bishop until four years afterwards. These explanations make the task of showing that we are not anti-Republican, easy. Now, there are four points in which every form of civil government should be unlike Church government; but I shall contrast the latter with Republicanism only. In a Republic, the people frame their fundamental laws; but in a Church government, they are framed by the Great Head of the Church for her; secondly, in a Republic, the people either directly or indirectly, choose their officers; but in a Church government, God must first, by His Spirit, call her officers—the ministry—and it is allowed to the Church, in order to guard against imposture, only to acknowledge that call; and then it cannot revoke their powers while their lives are blameless; thirdly, even aliens, dwelling in a Republic, must be subject to its laws; but aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, may or may not place themselves under any Church government; and, in the last place, a Republic inflicts civil pains and penalties, such as death, upon offenders; but Church governments inflict no civil pains or penalties whatever. A Church, scripturally organized, must, therefore, blend in its government, the theocratic element, for Christ is King; the ecclesiastic, for he hath made such “overseers to feed the Church of God;” and the Democratic element, for by their fruits ye shall know them—who are Christ’s appointees. Hence, the analogy between the government of a Church, and that of a Republic, must necessarily be

very slender. Nevertheless, within the limitations specified, the Methodist Church government approximates as nearly the model of our Federal Government as any in the land.

If you say Methodist Episcopacy is anti-Republican, because it possesses legislative, executive and judicial powers, we answer, it is another of your grand mistakes—it possesses no such powers. Our bishops have no legislative powers whatever, or anywhere. I have already informed you, they have not so much as a vote in any of our Church councils—they cannot participate in the trial of a member; hence, they have no executive authority in any one of our thousands of Churches—they have neither legislative nor executive authority in our General Conference—they cannot vote in the trial of any of our ministers; in this respect, they have no executive authority in our Annual Conferences, and are cut off from participation in its legislation also; and the small portion of judicial and executive authority they are allowed there, is held under strict responsibility to the Eldership over which they exercise this authority; and even their appointing power may be changed by a single vote of the General Conference. Hence, the prettily written fancy sketch of the youthful Bascom, is pointless in its assault upon our Episcopacy; it was dissipated by the clearer wisdom of his manhood; it was applicable, even to civil government, only *cum grano salis*.

The indulgence granted to the childish dream of a gifted youth, in his retention among us, is a good illustration of our freedom of speech; and a sufficient reply to the charge, that ministers were excluded from our

Church, only for holding the very same sentiments. And now, dear sir, as I have corrected your mistaken views of our system, I ask you solemnly, whether you think it possible that our Episcopacy, composed of men called of the Holy Ghost, promoted to the itineracy by two distinct acts of the membership, with specified restrictions upon their authority, and within the limitations which distinguish Church from civil authority, can be anti-Republican? !!! If you can reiterate the charge, I must say I think your conviction hopeless, and your case will then be an instance of a most excellent judgment, overpowered by a stronger prejudice. It will remind me of an ancient orator, who, when a tumult arose, among the people for want of bread, and he failed to quiet them with the assurance that violence could not create food, remarked, the cause of his failure was, the belly had no ears. If I have failed to satisfy you that we are very good Republicans, it will be because prejudice is very deaf, and can neither understand facts nor logic. But I hope better things of you.

From the confident manner in which you brandished Webster, in your attack upon Episcopacy, I must remove the small difficulty which his definition has thrown in the way of your conviction. The word Episcopal may be used in either the Puseyistic, or Romanist, or Bible sense; we use it in the latter, and Paul is a better definer of the word than Webster. In Acts xx: 28, it is said, "The Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers* to feed the Church." Now, the word rendered overseers, is the very word in question; it is Episcopous in the Greek, the accusative plural of Episcopos, and may be translated either overseers or bishops, at pleasure. Did Paul

then know that a "schoolboy could see in five minutes" that Episcopal, the very word he used, meant something despotic, and in antagonism with Republican institutions? A word more on this subject. Paul said, the Holy Ghost (not the people, take notice,) had made you overseers to feed the flock of God. We should guard, therefore, against the danger of pressing Republicanism into an usurpation of the office of the Holy Ghost.

I have in my hand a curious little book, containing a Confession of Faith, and a summary of Church Discipline—a Baptist Discipline. It was published for the Charleston Baptist Association, in 1813. The Articles of Faith were first adopted by a hundred baptized congregations in England and Wales, in 1689, and thereafter by the Philadelphia and Charleston Baptist Associations. I find many excellencies in it, and some things, which might be improved. It is not anti-Republican for nothing can be anti-Republican in Church government, except it distinctly opposes civil laws; but the Church government it describes, is very much unlike the model of our federal government. On page 6, of the Discipline, it reads, "Each distinct Church may exercise every act of discipline, without being subject to the cognizance of any other Church, Presbytery, Synod or Council whatever."

On page 58, of the volume, it says, that, "Messengers of the Churches assembled, are not entrusted with any Church power properly so called, or with any jurisdiction over the Churches themselves, to exercise any censures, either over any Churches or persons." And on page 28, "The Baptist Association arrogates no higher title than that of an advisory council—it is by no means

to be deemed a superior judicature—it presumes not to impose its sentiments upon its constituents under pain of excommunication.” Now, if our Federal Government were formed on this model, and our Federal Congress were made a mere advisory council, without even the power of uttering censures, much less of making laws, then our government would be a farce; and our executive and judiciary would be destroyed. In truth, we would have no government at all. Our State Government, if formed after this beautiful model, would in like manner be farcical, without a Supreme Court or an Executive, and our country would present the spectacle of an immense number of broken neighborhoods, having severally the supreme power in their hands, and perfectly denationalized. Verily, this is rather *Red Republicanism!*

It is true, your Associations can declare non-fellowship with any Church—that is to say, you can virtually turn out a whole Church, for non-fellowship amounts to this: if they exercise the Christian liberty, dear to the Lord’s freemen, of partaking of the Holy Communion with their orthodox brethren—and yet your Association “cannot censure either Churches or persons.” It is not my business to reconcile these contradictions. This view of your Church government, prepares me to understand the remark, not of an enemy, but of a leading man in your Church, the editor of the Baptist Recorder and Register, New York. I quote from the last S. C. Advocate. He says, “We (Baptists) present ourselves to the world, a body rent by multiform divisions, animated by anything but the Spirit of Christ, and illustrating anything but the theory of regenerated Churches.” This

is a sad picture—I would it were better. I find on page 15 of the Discipline, another rather un-Republican feature in your economy. “To dismiss a member to the world at large ought never to be done in any other way than by excommunication;” and on page 23, “As consent is necessary to a person’s coming into the Church, so none can go out of it without its consent.” Hence, if a Baptist becomes a Presbyterian, or a Methodist, he is invariably expelled. This is Republicanism with a vengeance! Does it not look like forcing your members to remain Baptists? I pass by the fact, page 6, that female members are excluded from all share of rule in your Church.

In conclusion, I admit all that you affirm of Robert Hall’s disapproval of the war with the American Colonies, though he was a good subject of the English monarchy. I reverence the man for his genius, and for his piety, and for his abhorrence of your practice of close communion, concerning which he says, page 227, vol. ii. “With mingled surprise and indignation they behold us (Baptists) making pretensions which no other denomination of Protestants assumes; placing ourselves in an attitude of hostility to the whole Christian world.” Again: “There is nothing in the Church of Rome that has excited more indignation and disgust than this very pretension.” Lastly allow me to say, the noble spirits among you who attend to the legitimate functions of the ministry, preaching Christ, and him crucified, will do good, whether the deficiencies of your government be few or many. May God speed their holy labors.

Fraternally yours, etc.

May, 24th, 1855.

E. J. HAMILL.

REPLY TO LETTER II.

The zeal and spirit of Mr. Hamill commended; Precise question at issue; Foreign topics; Episcopacy a transplant from Europe; Analogy between the Church of England and the Methodist Episcopal Church; Singular way of proving two orders in the Methodist ministry; Bishops Soule and Capers; Mistake corrected; The right of appeal; The part Mr. Wesley and his first preachers took in our Revolutionary War; Not probable that they would impart the element of Republicanism to a religious structure; James O'Kelly, William McKendree, Rice Haggard, and others; An effort to reform the system in 1824 and 1828; Insulting answer of the General Conference to sundry memorials; Exclusion and suspension of the reformers; Moral heroism of "fifty females;" Acts xx. 28; No connection between Bible and Methodist Episcopacy; Sophistry in the use of the term "Puseyistic;" Itinerant plan; Episcopacy defined; The "Democratic Element;" Baptist anarchy; "Close communion;" Specimen of logic; Another "fancy sketch" from the "youthful Bascom;" Courtesy asked.

"But be ye not called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN."—Jesus Christ.

We admire the zeal of Brother Hamill, in defending Methodist Episcopacy—a zeal truly worthy of the best of causes. Perhaps his discretion may not be so highly commended, even by many members of his own communion. Be this, however, as it may, it is evident that he clings to the Episcopal feature of his Church with

unyielding tenacity; and that if it is ever changed, no part of the glory or shame of such a revolution will ever be his heritage. We repeat, the fervent zeal of our good brother excites our admiration—and we may add that the spirit in which he writes is worthy of all praise. If Episcopal Methodism cannot be shown to be Republican and Democratic, it will not be for the want of either zeal or ability. We presume Brother Hamill is as competent to discuss this subject as any member of the Alabama Conference. And if he fails in this defence, it is fair to conclude that it will be because the polity of that Church cannot be defended before an American constituency.

The precise question at issue between Brother Hamill and ourself is this—*Is Methodist Episcopacy anti-Democratic and anti-Republican?* We affirm, he denies. He will not consider it strange, therefore, if we rule out everything which does not bear upon the main question.

And here we must correct an impression upon Brother Hamill's mind, in regard to his "thirteen points." He seems to think that, because we did not answer them *seriatim*, they are unanswerable. We supposed that in so far as these points involved the main issue in the article from the "Western Watchman," to wit: That Methodist Episcopacy is anti-American—we had answered them to all intents and purposes. So far as that article related to a proscription of Methodists *politically* for their *religious* sentiments, we did, and we do now, utterly repudiate it. *We fight Episcopacy with different weapons.* But so far as that article discussed the polity of the Methodist Church as an element in the formation of character, religious or political, we did regard it as

falling within the legitimate range of discussion, and as such it was transferred to our columns. Our brother sadly mistakes us if he supposes that we had "repudiated the *slandrous* article." If we had regarded it as "slandrous," it certainly would not have been published. But enough of this.

We are gratified that Brother Hamill concedes that the Episcopal feature of the Methodist Church is a proper subject for newspaper discussion. While, however, he admits "that ecclesiastical power has been invoked by princes since the day of Constantine—and that religious opinions, whether true or false, are wonderfully potent in their influence upon the human soul," he pronounces them "foreign topics . . . interwoven into this debate." This to us is not surprising. Wonderfully potent in their influence upon the human soul, and yet foreign in a discussion, in which this very power is the subject of debate. That is to say, the most important element of power which has ever been brought to bear upon the human mind, for weal or woe, in moulding its habits, prejudices, and principles, is totally foreign in a controversy, in which its effects are the very point contested!!

Our brother has showed his sagacity in excepting to the introduction of such truths in this discussion. But whether these are "foreign topics," will appear in the course of these remarks.

We took occasion to remark in our first article, that Episcopacy was a transplant from a foreign soil. Bro. Hamill responds, "our Bible is a foreign transportation." True; and if the question were, whether Episcopacy is of Divine institution, his illustration would be in point. But we submit that he has no right to make

such an assumption for Episcopacy. Christianity is one thing—Episcopacy is quite a different thing. The question we are debating is not, whether Christianity or the Bible is anti-Republican—but whether Episcopacy, as being a vital element in the structure of Methodism, a transplant from the despotic powers of Europe, and which was foisted upon Christianity by that licentious tyrant, Henry VIII., is in harmony with American Democracy:—whether a principle, which despots regard as essential to the stability of their thrones, in maintaining their power to rule the minds and consciences of their subjects, is a safe principle to be incorporated into the organic laws of “the largest denomination of Christians,” in a Republican government.

Again: To the remark that “the Episcopal Church of England is the type of the Episcopal feature of the Methodist Church,” Brother Hamill replies, “This is a very great error for a man of your erudition.” Let us see. In the Episcopal Church of England, all the powers of government, legislative, executive, and judicial, are in the hands of the clergy; and so it is in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the Church of England, the power of ordination is vested supremely in the hands of the bishops; so it is in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the English Establishment, the power to supply the Churches with pastors is vested in Episcopal hands; so it is in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the ecclesiastical councils of the English Church, no layman’s voice is ever heard; and in the similar councils of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the principle of representation, on the part of the laity, is equally excluded. In the ecclesiastical polity of Eng-

land, the revenues of the Church, which proceed from the people, pass beyond their constitutional control into the hands of its rulers; and the same is true of the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, if the late Bishop Bascom is to be believed. To become a member of the Church of England, a man resigns his right of suffrage; and no less is it true of him who attaches himself to the Methodist Episcopal Church. And so we might run this parallel to almost any extent. The truth is, entire chapters and sections of the ritual of the Methodist Episcopal Church are transferred, with very slight modification, from the Book of Common Prayer. The reader has but to compare the Methodist Discipline with the Book of Common Prayer, and he will be no little surprised at the likeness between the mother and the daughter.

But, says Brother Hamill, "We (Methodists) hold that the Bible makes but two orders in the ministry," by which he means, we suppose, deacons and bishops, or elders, using these latter terms interchangeably. If so, then every elder is a bishop! Why the ceremonies of ordination as laid down in the Discipline? Why re-ordain a man to a bishoprick, when he has already been ordained to that office, since bishop and elder are the same? Our brother has a singular way of proving this. He alleges that because Mr. Hamline voluntarily vacated his position as bishop, and went back into the rank of elders, that therefore bishops and elders are the same! By parity of reasoning, because Charles V. resigned his crown in his old age, and went into voluntary seclusion, therefore the German king is nothing more nor less than a German citizen! But what say the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church on this subject? We

quote first from the senior bishop, Dr. Soule: "I say, if this doctrine be a correct one, (that bishops are mere officers of the General Conference,) I have heard for the first time, either on the floor of this Conference, in an Annual Conference, or through the whole of the private membership of the Church, this doctrine advanced: this is the first time I have heard it."—*Report of the Debates in the Gen. Con.*, 1844, page 169.

The late bishop Capers spoke as follows on the same point:—"It has been urged that a bishop is only an officer of the General Conference, and that his election and not his consecration gives him his authorship as a bishop. If a bishop is no more than an officer of the General Conference, *wherefore is he consecrated?* A bishop an officer of the General Conference only! And is it in such a capacity that he ordains and stations the preachers of the Annual Conferences? An officer of the General Conference only! Then were it untrue and blasphemous to invest him with the office, with these holy words of the consecration service: 'Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a bishop in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'"—*Debates, &c.*, page 181.

And here we leave Brother Hamill and the bishops to settle this point, mooted for the first time in 1844, merely remarking that, as imperfect as our knowledge of "Church government" may be, we have been led to "make this great mistake" by the bishops of his own Church. So much, then, for this "mistake."

The next "very important point" in which our brother says we are mistaken, is, that exclusion on the part

of the Church is subject to appeal, and may be reversed by a bishop, &c. In this we are partly mistaken, and intended to make the correction before we read Brother Hamill's communication. We had not observed the distinction which the discipline makes between the method of procedure in the case of a private member and that of a preacher. The preacher has the right of appeal to an Annual Conference, the private member to a Quarterly Conference. But the principle we were discussing remains the same, to wit: that the action of a particular Church, in excluding one of its members, is *not a finality*—that another power is recognized by Methodism, *higher* than the Church. And this power is called by them Episcopacy. This was the main point we were discussing; and this, we suppose, will not be pronounced a mistake. And what is true of the final exclusion of members from the Church, is equally true of their reception. The Church, as such, can guard neither the door of ingress nor egress. Who ever heard of a Methodist minister consulting a Church as to who should become a member of it?

But it is time for us to take up the main subject of this discussion. Brother Hamill heads his article, "*Methodist Episcopacy* nor *anti-Republican*." Then it must be Republican. Let us see how far the facts in its history will sustain this assumption. We are not responsible for these facts; we find them recorded upon the impartial page of history, and we use them with no unkind feeling to our Methodist brethren. To begin, then, at the beginning: In 1775, Mr. Wesley published a communication in Lloyd's Evening Post, of which the following is an extract:

"Now, there is no possible way to put out this flame, [our Revolutionary struggle,] or hinder its rising higher and higher, but to show that the Americans are not used either cruelly or unjustly; that they are not injured at all, seeing they are not contending for *liberty* (this they had even in its full extent, both civil and religious,) neither for any *legal privileges*, for they enjoy all their charters grant. But what they contend for is, the illegal privilege of being exempt from Parliamentary taxation—a privilege this which no charter ever gave to any American Colony yet—which no charter can give, unless it be confirmed both by King, Lords, and Commons; which, in fact, our Colonies never had; which they never claimed till the present reign. This being the real state of the question, without any coloring or aggravation, what impartial man can either blame the King, or commend the Americans? With this view, to quench the fire by laying the blame where it was due, the 'Calm Address' was written.

I am, sir, your humble servant,
JOHN WESLEY."

About the same time, Mr. Wesley sent out six missionaries to the Colonies, and, as might have been expected, these missionaries reflected his political views. They were all Englishmen. Hence, it is said of them, that "they insulted the Americans, calling them *rebels*, and spoke contemptuously of that cause which the people had sworn to support. . . . And what was the result? . . . Hatred and opposition to them wherever they went; until, at last, five out of the six fled for their lives, and the sixth, Mr. Asbury, was obliged to lie concealed in Mr. White's, in the State of Delaware.*—*Letters on Methodist Episcopacy*, by A. McCaine, page 40.

* See Appendix A.

Such was some of the fathers of Methodism. To what extent they were capable of imparting the element of Republicanism to the structure they were about to rear, is left to the good sense of the reader. We have some other interesting facts in this connection, and in regard to the other fathers of this system, to which we may hereafter recur. We beg to be understood, as not impeaching the patriotism of the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We believe them to be as sincere Democrats and Republicans—as sincere lovers of their country, as any community of Christians in the United States. We only wish they were in religion what they are in politics. And since religion, whether properly or improperly conceived, is stronger than politics, and has in its history subverted all forms of government, it is reasonable to infer, that a time may come again when the less shall give way to the greater. And the only provision we can make against such an emergency, is, so to construct our ecclesiastical organizations, as to render such a contingency impossible. This, we believe, our Methodist brethren ought to do in their Church polity.

But let us see to what extent the subsequent history of Methodist Episcopacy sustains the declaration of Brother Hamill—"Methodist Episcopacy not anti-Republican." We shall only bring out two facts at present, that the reader may see to what extent the polity of "the largest denominations of Christians" in this country, harmonizes with our Democratic Republican form of government.

In the year 1792, one year after the death of Mr. Wesley, the Rev. James O'Kelly, alarmed at the "ex-

orbitant powers of the bishops," offered the following resolution at the General Conference:

"*Resolved*, That after the bishop appoints the preachers at Conference, to their several circuits, if any one think himself injured by the appointment, he shall have the right to appeal to the Conference, and state his objections; and if the Conference approve his objections, the bishop shall appoint him to another circuit."

This resolution, after being discussed for three days, was negatived by a large majority; whereupon the Rev. James O'Kelly, William McKendree, (afterwards bishop,) Rice Haggard, and others, withdrew from the connection. So sedulously have they guarded that irrevocable decree, viz: Thou shalt not change or alter any part or rule of our government, *so as to do away Episcopacy*, &c. Even the right of appeal from the decision of a bishop, or, as Brother Hamill would fain make us believe, the "permanent moderator" of the Conference is denied. This is *moderating* with a vengeance! We leave to our brother the pleasing task of exhibiting the peculiar Republican features of this aspect of the cherished dogma of his Church.

In the year 1824, a movement was commenced in the Methodist Episcopal Church, among many of the ministers and laymen, having reference to such modification of the organic law of that Church, as would secure to the laity an equal representation with the ministry, in their legislative councils. Union Societies were formed in perhaps every State in the confederacy, for the purpose of discussing this question and petitioning the next General Conference, which was to meet in 1828, to incorporate this principle of REPRESENTATION into their

constitution. Had the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church the *right* to form these societies, discuss this question, and petition the General Conference? O, yes, says Brother Hamill, "The freest expression of sentiment is indulged without blame." Only let "no man promulge Unitarianism or Universalism," or such like heresies, and the most perfect freedom of speech may be enjoyed. "Discussion, whether oral or written, but unfolds its wisdom and its beauty." Well, we propose "unfolding" one of these "beauties" for the admiration of the reader. Nothing strikes us like a *fact*. A living, acting, moving "beauty" is worth ten thousand creations of fancy.

The original promoters of this movement recommended the formation of these Union Societies throughout the United States, and resolved to publish a periodical pamphlet, one of which we have before us, entitled, "The Mutual Rights of the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church," for the purpose of giving the Methodist community a suitable opportunity to enter upon a calm and dispassionate discussion of the subjects in dispute." A "calm and dispassionate" inquiry as to whether private members and local preachers had any rights in the Church of Christ, and if so, what those rights were, it might be supposed would have been tolerated with impunity in a Church so peculiarly *Republican* in its organization, as we would be made to believe Methodism to be. But how was this movement treated? "In Tennessee, fourteen official members were expelled for attempting to form a Union Society!" "In North Carolina, several members of the Granville Union Society were expelled for being mem-

bers thereof." "In the fall of 1827, eleven ministers were suspended, and finally expelled from the Methodist Episcopal Church in this city (Baltimore,) and twenty-two laymen, for being members of the Union Society, and supporters of the mutual rights." Some "fifty female friends of these suspended and expelled brethren immediately withdrew from the Church, after addressing a letter to the preacher in charge," of which the following is an extract:—"To find our dear companions, fathers, brothers, children and friends, treated as criminals and enemies, persecuted, suspended and expelled, denounced as backsliders and disturbers of the peace, and ourselves treated coldly and distantly by our former friends, and by our pastors, *and all for a mere difference of opinion about Church government*, is more than we feel bound in Christian charity longer to endure; and therefore we feel it our duty, in the fear of God, to withdraw from the Church." Noble women! Your names deserve to be recorded upon the same page of history with those who signed our Declaration of Independence! The Protestant Methodist Church will not have discharged its duty to posterity if it fail to preserve your names among its richest memories!

But in the Conference of 1824, several memorials were presented, "praying that the government of the Church *might be made representative*, and more in accordance with the mutual rights of the ministers and people." And how were these memorials treated—memorials which sought to incorporate into the Methodist economy the vital element of our happy civil institutions? The Conference replied in a circular of some length, in which this remarkable passage occurs:—

"PARDON US IF WE KNOW NO SUCH RIGHTS, IF WE COMPREHEND NO SUCH PRIVILEGES!" We could use as many exclamation points here as Brother Hamill, but we are fearful the stock would become exhausted. And moreover, we prefer simply to state facts, and let the reader supply as many as he chooses. We are, therefore, prepared to answer Brother Hamill's question—"I ask you solemnly, whether you think it possible that our Episcopacy, composed of men called of the Holy Ghost, promoted to the itinerancy by two distinct acts of the membership, with the specified restrictions upon their authority, and within the limitations which distinguish Church from civil authority, can be anti-Republican?" The odium of an obtuseness, whether mental or moral, which cannot see either Democracy or Republicanism in a system, whose founders threw the weight of their religious character against our revolutionary struggle—whose very father declared, "we are no Republicans, and never intend to be,"—the constituted authorities of which, in answer to memorials asking for REPRESENTATION on the part of the private members, answer such memorials in the very venacular of the most absolute despotisms, "pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges,"—from the communion of which, ministers and laymen are suspended and expelled for discussing and seeking to secure their mutual rights to representation in its law-making power—we say, the odium of an obtuseness which cannot see either "the wisdom or beauty," or the Democracy and Republicanism of such a structure, we must be content to bear. Our "judgment" may be "overpowered by a strange pre-

judice." Perhaps the reader will be reminded of the well known couplet of Hudibras:

"Keen optics, sir, it takes, I ween,
To see what is not to be seen."

"*Pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges!*" And this language was uttered in the "monumental city" of this Union, and in sight of the venerable statue of WASHINGTON! It was uttered in response to an humble and respectful petition from a constituency asking for a *representation* in the legislative councils of a body claiming and exercising the right of taxation, the very principle asked for by our forefathers, and the denial of which on the part of the British Government, provoked our Revolutionary War! And it was uttered by the constituted authorities of an ecclesiastical hierarchy for which a serious claim is entered, that it is "*not anti-Republican*"—that it possesses "*the Democratic element!*" Is it uncharitable to say that such a reply to such a petition, is enough to flush the cheek of every American citizen with indignation?

But Bro. Hamill excepts to our resort to Webster for a definition of terms, by entering what the lawyers call a special plea. He seeks to identify Methodist and Bible Episcopacy. Hear him:—"The word Episcopal may be used in either the Puseyistic, Romanist, or Bible sense; we use it in the latter—and Paul is a better definer of the word than Webster. In Acts xx: 28, it is said—'The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the Church.' " We must again notify our brother,

protest, therefore, that Episcopacy is not entitled to the credit of that which is common to all forms of Church government; and that any argument based upon such an assumption, can prove no more for Episcopacy than for Congregational or Presbyterian government.

We must set our brother right on another point. To our remark that Methodist Episcopacy possesses legislative, executive, and judicial powers; and that inasmuch as the laity had no voice in either of these departments of its government, it must necessarily be anti-Republican, he replies, "It possesses no such powers; our bishops have no legislative powers whatever or anywhere. . . . They have not so much as a vote in any of our Church councils." Let us say once for all, that in applying the term Episcopacy to the government of the Methodist Church *we mean that it is a government of the clergy, in contradistinction to, and independently of, the people.* This we suppose to be the idea represented by Episcopacy in the "Discipline." Why should a bishop care to vote, when he has the whole Conference at command, and can "say to one come, and he cometh; and to another go, and he goeth?"—when he has but to utter his authoritative voice, and every minister in the Conference marches to his assigned field, without knowing one moment before the command is uttered, what his destination is? As well might it be said, that because the kings of England never had a vote in Parliament, therefore the British Government is a pure Democracy! We are astonished that our brother never saw the obvious fallacy of such an argument. But perhaps it was the best apology for Episcopacy he could make.

"A Church scripturally organized," says Brother

Hamill, "must therefore blend in its government the theocratic element, for Christ is King; the ecclesiastic, for he hath made such 'overseers to feed the Church of God;' and the *Democratic, for by their fruits ye shall know them*—who are Christ's appointees." Now we do positively aver, that we have looked at this sentence time and again, and we cannot discover "the Democratic element." And so anxious are we to find it, that we hereby promise to give any man a copy of the *South Western Baptist* for one year, who will point out the "Democratic element" in this sentence. It reminds us of a problem we heard in school-boy days,—“If the kitchen be fifteen feet square, how far is it to the spring?”

As we are not discussing the form of government peculiar to the Baptists, the reader will pardon us for permitting all that Brother Hamill says on that subject to pass unnoticed for the present at least. That has no sort of connection with this discussion. His very objections to the Baptist form of Church government are based upon the principle in his Church, which places it in antagonism with American Democracy, to wit: *the people are incompetent to govern themselves, and therefore ought to be excluded from the legislative councils of his Church.* It may be proper for us to say, in answer to his philippic against us for expelling members, who leave us and join other communions, that we do not believe the same person can be a member of *two* Churches at the same time; and when such a case occurs, we simply withdraw our Church jurisdiction and fellowship from such person. We have no other way of disposing of them.

When the present question is disposed of, we are ready to discuss that also.

But, to cap the climax, Brother Hamill brings in that horrible practice among the Baptists of "close communion!" and treats us to an extract or two, from Robert Hall, on that subject. But what puzzles us is, to find out what this has to do with the subject in debate. Thrown into the form of an argument, how formidable it becomes! Here it is: In the opinion of Baptists, the Scriptures teach, that sacramental communion ought to be restricted to baptized believers; therefore the Methodist Episcopal Church is a Democratic Republican government.

We close with another "fancy sketch" from "the youthful Bascom." Whether it is "pointless in its assault upon our Episcopacy," is left to the judgment of the reader.

"ART. 17th. No power possesses so fatal a principle of increase and accumulation in itself, as ecclesiastical power. Its facilities for production and multiplication are many and fearful, and should be vigilantly guarded against by all who consider the image of God as closely connected with the rights of man. And whenever the growth and manifestation of this power, in any of its innumerable forms and modes of operation, shall clearly amount to an invasion of Christian rights, the injured and oppressed should resist the encroachment with manly decision and unyielding remonstrance. In every Church where the principle of representation is excluded, in the affairs of its government, the right of private judgment becomes a nullity, and faith and practice are necessarily, to a great extent, the offsprings of prescription. The right of deciding what are the will and mind of God, in matters of faith and discipline, by prescriptive interpretation, is conceded in the Scriptures to no

man or body of men, exclusively. Of course, the right of judgment belongs to all, equally and inalienably; and when the ministry avail themselves of the indifference, inattention, or ignorance of the people brought under their charge from time to time, to constitute themselves their legislative masters, and executive guardians, they usurp the dominion of conscience, and although never complained of, are *de facto* religious tyrants, because they assume and exercise rights that do not, and can not in the nature of things belong to them. It should not be overlooked, moreover, that when the ministry are considered by the laity as the sole judges and depositories of faith and discipline, the people lose the only powerful motive, the only direct incentive they can possibly have to inquire and decide for themselves, in the infinitely momentous concerns of truth and duty. Such a monopoly of power by the ministry, tends directly to mental debasement, consequent indecision of character, insincerity and misguided zeal."

We respectfully ask Brother Hamill, whether the same courtesy we have extended to him, can be extended to us in some one of the organs of his denomination—whether it would not be just and proper for this discussion to appear in the columns of some one of the "Advocates?" Since "discussion, whether oral or written, only serves to unfold its wisdom and its beauties," we shall confidently expect this courtesy to be extended. As a well-known political editor used to say, *nous verons*.

May 24th, 1855.

LETTER III.

METHODISM LIKE ITS CREED—PEACE AND
GOOD WILL TO MAN.

Christian courtesy appreciated; A case of Twisting; Precious charity of Mr. Graves; Foreign topics again; Sixty American preachers; Admirable logic; Robert Hall's opinion of Wesley; Robert Hall repels the charge of Republicanism from Baptists; Wesley's view of the duty of American Methodists; George Washington's prayer for the prosperity of Methodism: Children's teeth not set on edge; Thomas Muncer's proclamation; John Matthias' and John Bocold's Republic; Concession; Angels of the Churches first among equals; Paul's ordination; Bishop Capers' opinion; Human instrumentality designates the field of ministerial labor; Charles V. not German Emperor by divine right; Corrections; Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel's description of the lay management in the English Church; Retraction demanded; What would make the English monarchy exceedingly Democratic; Supposed one hundred Baptist itinerants; In the business of Baptist State and Southern Conventions we have lay management; What rights and privileges we ignore; O'Kelly's resolution; Cordial acknowledgement; The courtesy returned.

"Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

—PETER.

REV. MR. HENDERSON:

You honor me in imagining me as fully able to defend Methodism as any of my brethren; I thank you for your high opinion of me; but I would rather you would as-

cribe my success to the fact that truth is powerful. My zeal is certainly worthy of a better cause than the defence of my Church from the aspersions cast upon our Republicanism; but when a minister of so much reputation as yourself, endorses the charge, it becomes necessary to show the untarnished beauty of our economy. The successful performance of this task will amply justify my discretion. You welcomed me cordially to your columns in your first communication. Do you now wish "to rule out everything which does not bear upon the main question?" I demur to your self-constituted censorship in this case. I do not question your right to show, if you can, the irrelevancy of my arguments to the point under discussion; but for a party in debate, to claim the power to say in what respect his opponent shall not even be heard, is an unheard of assumption. I shall not concede this claim, even to the displacement of a single word; nor does this demand speak flatteringly of your courage in the premises.

You do not now, it seems, repudiate anything in the slanderous article which originated this discussion; only in so far as it "relates to a political proscription of Methodists." You then endorse the following positions of that article—Methodist Episcopacy is a foe to human rights—it exerts a paralyzing influence over freedom of thought—it has imposed articles of faith upon the people without their consent—Methodists degrade themselves by submission to bishops, in regard to Church property, more than Roman Catholics—our bishops control our public moneys, and buildings—they can control the suffrages of our members, and thus, hold

the balance of political power in their hands. Is it right Brother Henderson to be thus

"Twisting in, and twisting out,
Leaving the beholder still in doubt"

of what you do allege against Methodism? I must then, deliberately say to you, they are all, and each of them, utterly false; for proof see my first article, which you have barely deigned to notice.

I think it due the public to state, that I find a large part of the article from the "Western Watchman," in the Great Iron Wheel, a work written by a Baptist, the Rev. Mr. Graves—a portion of the piece is without quotation marks. See pages 291, 292, 295, 296, 299, 300. A few precious extracts will show the spirit of the author. Mr. Graves charitably classes "ruling elders of the Presbyterian Church, and Methodist Conferences, with Pio Nono, and styles them big and little popes," (page 45, Iron Wheel.) "We see bishops and ruling elders lording it over God's children;" (page 50.) "Any Pede-Baptist Society is a huge clerical despotism itself;" (page 50.) On pages 254, etc., he calls "all Protestant sects harlots and abominations of the earth," and the communing together of Methodists and Presbyterians, "a blasphemous farce, prostituting the holy emblems to the propagation of a falsehood." On page 265, he says "Protestant ministers have usurped Christ's place, and exercise his authority over his Church." You may imagine my surprise then, on discovering that the piece, ascribed in the "Watchman," to some profound philosopher unconnected with any Church, was surely an ef-

fusion of the tender mercies of the lovely Mr. Graves, whose charity is so strikingly displayed in the foregoing extracts. What meant this concealment of the author? For charity of this description, however, I never gave you credit, and therefore did not look for you to endorse the beautiful sayings of such a writer.

With regard to those foreign topics—the invoking of ecclesiastical power by princes—the potency of religious opinions—that despots regard Episcopacy as essential to their thrones; what has this to do with Methodism? Have princes invoked its aid? Do the thrones of England, France, Austria, and Russia, owe their stability to American Episcopal Methodism? Did Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Tiberius, the Roman Emperor, and the Sultan of Turkey, all owe their thrones to Christian Episcopacy, and that two, of American Methodism? Did Henry VIII., that licentious tyrant, foist Episcopacy upon American Methodism? It would be bold reasoning to affirm all this.

But John Wesley was a loyal subject of an English king; therefore, our Methodist Episcopacy is anti-Republican! and Methodist Protestantism also! Five out of six Methodist preachers who were Englishmen, fled, and therefore, the sixty American Methodist preachers, who in 1784, some years afterward, organized the Methodist Episcopal Church, were anti-Republican also, and the Church they organized is hostile to our institutions. Admirable logic! John Wesley was one of the greatest, purest and most useful men, since the days of the Apostles—a man of whom your great Robert Hall says, “Whitfield and Wesley will be hailed by posterity as the second Reformers of England.” Howbeit, he was

no Statesman, and knowing only the aristocratic, and despotic Republics of Greece, Rome, Genoa, Florence, Venice, etc., he may be pardoned for having preferred a limited monarchy, to what he deemed an experiment in government, the glorious results of which no mortal could have anticipated. *Robert Hall himself, thus repels the charge of Republicanism from all dissenters, Baptists and others. "Dissenters are reproached with the appellation of Republicans, but the truth of this charge has neither appeared from facts, nor been supported by any reasonable evidence."* (vol. ii, p. 82.) Is it just to conclude from this, that American Baptists are anti-Republican? I think not. Hear now, how nobly at the close of the war in 1784, Wesley speaks to Americans. "As our American brethren are totally disentangled, both from the State and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one, or the other; they are now at full liberty, simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely set them free." Nobly spoken, John Wesley! Is this a man hostile to our institutions, who says God has made them free? (Bangs' History M. E. Church, vol. i, p. 152.)

There is another striking fact in the history of American Methodism. They were the first to present a congratulatory address to General Washington on his accession to the Presidency. The address and the answer in a few days, says Bangs, (p. 281,) were inserted in the public prints; and some of the ministers and members of other Churches, appeared dissatisfied that the Methodists should take the lead. "In that address they express confidence that the wisdom and integrity of Washington

will preserve the civil and religious liberties transmitted to us by the providence of God and the glorious revolution." And what does the Great Father of our country reply to them? Does he, while the facts of the revolution were yet new, tell them they are anti-Republican? No, but he says,—“I TAKE IN THE kindest PART, THE PROMISE YOU MAKE OF PRESENTING YOUR PRAYERS AT THE THRONE OF GRACE, FOR ME, AND THAT I LIKEWISE IM-PLORE THE DIVINE BENEDICTION ON YOURSELVES AND YOUR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY. GEORGE WASHINGTON.” Verily, sir, the prayer of that matchless patriot, offered for the divine benediction upon the Methodist bishops, and the Methodist community, will be a shield to our patriotism, which the em-poisoned darts of malignity will never penetrate. The proof, that will establish the anti-Republicanism of our Episcopacy, will also convict the immortal Washington, as a traitor to Republicanism. But rob us of these glorious facts of Methodism, and let it be granted for the sake of argument, that John Wesley was opposed to our free institutions; would you hold us responsible for it? Would you say “the fathers have eaten sour grapes and set the children’s teeth on edge?” Would it be just to frame this anti-Republican bill of attainder against us? No; your conscience responds that it is not just. I agree with you, and therefore, will not charge upon you the licentious madness of the German Baptists, or Ana-Baptists, as they have been called. I will refer to it, however, that you may see how unjust it would be to charge you with what you utterly detest.

In Orchard’s Baptist History, one of your own publi-

cations, page 349, Thomas Muncer, of Mulhausen, Thuringia, is pronounced *one of the most eminent Baptists*. "Muncer," says Orchard, "stirred up the peasants against the nobles and magistrates of Germany." And D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation gives us the following proclamation from him, volume iii, page 258:—"Arise and fight the battle of the Lord. The time is come. France, Germany, and Italy are up and doing. Forward, Forward, Forward—Dran, Dran, Dran. Heed not the cries of the ungodly. They will weep like children, but be you pitiless. Dran, Dran, Dran—Fire burns—let your swords be ever tinged with blood. Dran, Dran, Dran." Signed, Muncer, God's servant against the ungodly.

"They maintained that among Christians who have the precepts of the gospel to direct, and the Spirit of God to guide them, the office of magistrate is unnecessary, and an encroachment on spiritual liberty—and that every man may lawfully marry as many wives as he thinks proper." (Russell's Modern Europe, p. 372, vol. i.) After Muncer was put to death, John Matthias and John Bocold, formed a singular kind of Republic, in Munster, from which Matthias wrote to his brethren, in the low countries, inviting them to assemble at Mount Sion (Munster,) to set out in a body, and reduce all nations under their dominion. After Matthias was slain, John Bocold was made king; he took fourteen wives, and with the community over which he reigned, became a fac-simile of Mormonism. I know you repudiate the licentiousness and tyranny of these Baptists, who would have carried fire and sword; like Mahomet, to the ends of the earth, if they had not been overthrown.

Now, there, would be as much logic and justice in charging their crimes upon American Baptists, who abhor them, as in charging Wesley's loyalty upon free American Methodists.

I concede your claims to the character of a true branch of the Church of Christ, as fully as if these facts had never darkened the history of Baptists; but not because your succession flowed through this corrupt channel, but because you reverence the New Testament Scriptures; though I wish you had more respect for that religion of the Old Testament, which dictated the glorious Psalms of David, and because the spirit of the Lord is often found in your assemblies.

You thought, as you brandished Webster so triumphantly, that Episcopacy was in mortal hostility to freedom; but when I referred you to a better definer than Webster—Paul—for which you ought to thank me, you admit that Bible Episcopacy is divine, but you think it unlike Methodist Episcopacy. Why! Because all the elders were bishops. I admit it, and so do all Methodist standards. Why not call them so? Because the New Testament calls them both elders and bishops, and for the sake of marking the distinction in office of him who is called by his brethren to preside over them as the *primus inter pares*—the first among equals, custom has harmlessly appropriated the title of bishops to them alone. But New Testament bishops did not preside over elders. You are mistaken; even in Ephesus, the Church referred to, there was the angel of the Church of Ephesus, and John is ordered to write to him. Was this a celestial spirit? No. Was it the collective body of elders? No; but one who was in a higher degree

responsible for the integrity of the Church. It was, the first among equals, a president or moderator, if you please, of elders. Hear Dr. George Campbell, the Presbyterian (Eccles. Lect. p. 115): "Certain it is, that the very names of church officers were borrowed from the synagogue, which had also its elders, overseers, deacons, and amongst whom one usually presided, who was called the angel of the congregation, the title given by our Lord to the president of Christian assemblies." Why, then, set an elder, if he be a bishop already, apart by an ordination service to a higher office? Because Paul who was already an Apostle, was set apart by a very solemn ordination service, for a special work; "When they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." Acts xiii. 3. Was this intended to make Paul an arch Apostle? By no means. Well just such is our ordination.

Bishop Capers contends, and so do I, that if our bishops were mere officers of the Conference, in the same sense as editors, and might be removed without cause, by a single balloting, they should not be set apart to their office by so solemn a ceremonial; but he, in the very same passage, expressly disavows high Churchism. Our bishops, sir, if not confined to a single Church, like Paul, "have the care of all the Churches;" and in the intervals of Conferences, faithfully labor in word and doctrine with the simplest of us. You desire to know whether, in the polity of Methodism, the Holy Ghost or the bishops appoint the overseers? Or are bishop and Holy Ghost identical terms? Ah, that was the unkindest cut of all. Do you wish to insinuate that our bishop is our God? If not, what can be the meaning of your very ir-

reverent question? Either the Holy Ghost called you into the ministry, or you have entered into the fold by some other way than the door; and you know what Christ says of such: "But if you were called of the Holy Ghost, I need not say to you that human instrumentality must designate your special field of labor;" and so it is with us. I trust to hear no more of such irreverence. Do not, therefore, fight against an Episcopacy which is an importation from inspired men.

Bishop Hamline's resignation, with the consent of his brethren, does tell unmistakeably that we hold but two orders in the ministry, *jure divino*; by divine right; had God instituted a third order, and called him to it, he could not innocently have resigned it without the divine permission, as an elder cannot, without sin, abandon the ministry to which he is called: howbeit, after the example of apostolic Churches, we may invest any of these heaven-called men with a special presidency. Charles V. was not German Emperor, *jure divino*; he never was by divine right, which is the point in question, anything more than a German citizen.

It now becomes my painful duty to correct a whole series of the most palpable misrepresentations of facts I have ever known made by an educated and respectable minister. It is in the analogy you have drawn between the English Church and ours. In doing this, I shall quote from "The Union of Church and State," by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, an open communion Baptist. You say, that in "the Episcopal Church of England, all the powers of government, legislative, executive, and judicial, are in the hands of the clergy—the power to supply Churches is in Episcopal hands—in the

ecclesiastical councils of the English Church, no layman's voice is ever heard—in the ecclesiastical polity of England, the revenues of the Church, which proceed from the people, pass beyond their constitutional control into the hands of its rulers—to become a member of the Church of England, a man recognizes his right of suffrage, etc., and so in all these respects is it in the Methodist Episcopal Church.” Hear Mr. Noel on all these points *seriatim*: “Bishops and pastors have no manner of spiritual jurisdiction within the (English) Churches, but from the Crown—the Crown may delegate its spiritual authority to ecclesiastical lawyers, who may exercise all Church discipline within the Churches in its name—all ministers of the Church of England must acknowledge this supremacy of the Crown in spiritual things, on pain of excommunication.” p. 130. “The Court of Arches, acting by authority of the Crown, will punish any minister who, with the concurrence of the whole Church of which he is pastor, should refuse the communion to any ungodly person whom he could not legally prove to be an open and notorious evil liver.” p. 159. And secondly—in England the prelates (or bishops) are nominated by the State. p. 75. “In England nearly all the Churches have pastors imposed upon them by the State.” Again: “The Crown presents to 952 benefices, archbishops and bishops to 1248, ecclesiastical corporations to 787, dignitaries to 1851, colleges to 721, and private patrons to 5096.” p. 217. And I may add, the disposal of these at auction is very common. “The result is, the Churches have pastors forced upon them from these five classes—1, college-fellows; 2, political adherents of the government; 3, sons of patrons; 4, sons of wealthy

men, who pay for situations for them; and 5, sons of clergymen who find it easier to educate their sons for the Church, than for any other profession." p. 223. Thirdly—"Anglican curates are totally unrepresented in the sacred synod of the nation." p. 328. Fourthly—"The supremacy of the State determines the settlement of the pastors within the Establishment, its doctrine and worship, its discipline and government." p. 135. Fifthly—"all persons holding titheable property, must contribute to the maintenance of the clergy, whether they approve of the contribution or not, since the clergy may enforce the payment of dues by process of law." p. 120. This, too, from all denominations. "As the State is the owner of the ecclesiastical property, by which it maintains the incumbents of the Establishment, it has a right to resume those funds." p. 242.

In this picture of the Church of England, *you have lay management to the fullest extent you could desire*—lay lords, and members of Parliament, and lay judges, with a lay woman (Queen Victoria,) as the head of the Church—appointing bishops and pastors, and determining doctrines, worship, and government, and the State taxing Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, under civil penalties, for the support of the clergy of the Church of England.

Is Methodist Episcopacy like this, sir? Does the State of Alabama do all this for us? In view of this exposure of your most palpable misrepresentations, by so high an authority as the celebrated Baptist Minister, the Rev. Mr. Noel, I now formally demand of you, as an honest man, a solemn and unqualified retraction of your glaring errors in the points specified.

When you are told our bishops have no legislative power whatever, or anywhere; no vote in the trial of either a member or a minister; neither executive, legislative, nor judicial power in our General Conference, and no executive authority in any one of our thousands of Churches; you seem to give up the question of the anti-Republicanism of our bishops, and say you mean by Episcopacy—a government by the clergy. With the next breath you take back your recantation, and wish to know, "Why should a bishop care to vote—as well might it be said because the kings of England never had a vote in Parliament, therefore the British Government is pure Democracy." Now, without dwelling upon the fact, that kings can dissolve Parliaments, and even queens have ordered them not to attempt to legislate where they forbade them; that no acts of Parliament become laws of the realm without the signature of the monarch; though Bishop Hamline said, "It would be treason for a bishop to unseal his lips in the General Conference"(Debates, p. 130); I will show under what conditions only, the analogy between an English king and an American Methodist bishop would hold good. First; The office of an English king should be elective, like that of a bishop. Secondly; The Parliament should have the power at every session to inspect his acts, and depose him, and even deprive him of the rights of an English citizen, if he were guilty of imprudence; just as our General Conference can do with our bishops, for imprudence. Thirdly; That he should have no power to either veto or sanction their laws, as our bishops have none. Fourthly; That any member of Parliament, or citizen, might retire with honor from under his jurisdiction.


tion, as any minister or member with us, can demand a certificate of good standing, with the avowed purpose of joining another orthodox Church. And lastly; That Parliament can materially change the powers of a king by a single vote, as the General Conference can, the power of our bishops. Now, my brother, you need not be astonished if I should pronounce such a monarchy as that, exceedingly Democratic.

Still you think an itinerancy, constituted such by the suffrages of our people, in two distinct votes, is anti-Republican, if it admits no lay delegation. Let us see; suppose, for instance, you had one hundred Baptist itinerant ministers assembled in Convention in Montgomery, to be scattered to the four winds, in such a way as frequently to involve heavy sacrifices, severe labors, great privations, and often pecuniary loss—all cheerfully submitted to, for the sake of preaching the gospel to every creature—would you, could you, think it fair and just, and Republican, that laymen, whose knowledge of the work and of the men must be limited, from the fact that their business keeps them at home, and who make no such sacrifices themselves, should rise in Convention and order every one of the supposed one hundred Baptist itinerants to their several fields of labor, and then quietly return to their homes, leaving the itinerants, who had no voice to appoint them to a single duty, to strike their tents, and go wherever these home-keeping lay delegates ordered them. I can tell you, from experience, that if you were a regular itinerant Baptist, you would soon feel, deeply feel, the one-sidedness of such Republicanism.

With regard to business in which the laity are

equally interested with the ministry—such business as constitutes the entire sphere of operations of your State and Southern Convention—we have already lay delegation and lay management: witness our Joint Boards of Finance, and our Tract, Sunday School, and Missionary operations. Our great Missionary Society, which disburses \$160,000 annually—our largest collection, has eight lay and four clerical managers; and so of the rest. If, therefore, a layman demands the privilege of scattering one hundred ministers to the four winds, and then quietly returning home, you will pardon us Brother Henderson, *if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges*—it would be a sin against Republicanism, of which we cannot as patriots, be guilty. It was a fit sentiment to be uttered by our bishops in the presence of the statue of *that Washington, whose blessings rested on their fathers*.

But we are anti-Republican because J. O'Kelly's resolution was lost by a large majority. Ah! indeed! Did J. O'Kelly want lay delegation? Not at all. If the resolution had passed, we would have been no less anti-Republican in your estimation. Had not the majority a right to decline disputing about their appointments? You forget yourself if you call this anti-Republicanism. Your frank, out-spoken, cordial acknowledgment that Methodists are as sincere Democrats and Republicans as any community of Christians in the United States, pleases me. "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." I suppose you include also our noble bishops in this patriotic category. I return the courtesy, and frankly avow my confidence in the patriotism of American Baptists, and the cheerfulness with which



I would see them elevated to the highest offices in the land. I am gratified also with your cordial endorsement of our glorious itinerancy. I begin to have some hopes that you will yet appreciate justly our noble economy. I have prepared a full reply to every single point of your last communication; but in regard to your wish to give space for other communications in your paper, I withhold a portion of it.

In conclusion, I remark, I would gladly join you in requesting the publication of these articles in our Church papers.

Yours, respectfully,

E. J. HAMILL.

June 7th, 1855.

REPLY TO LETTER III.

TRUE ORIGIN OF METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

Hypothetical argument; Interesting letter from Mr. Wesley; Mr. Wesley the father of *Methodism*, not of *Episcopal* Methodism; Ordination of Dr. Coke as superintendent, not as bishop, of the American Societies; Mr. Wesley's account of it; Interesting overture of Dr. Coke to Bishop White and the Lord Bishop of London; *Thrilling* letter from *Presbyter* Wesley to BISHOP Asbury; A sad mistake either in the book of Discipline or in History; The true origin of Episcopacy; The General Conference persists in calling Mr. Wesley by a name, than which he affirmed he had rather be "called a *knave*, a *fool*, a *scoundrel*, a *rascal*;" The "bitter pill" suppressed; Two interesting authentic documents placed in juxtaposition; Bishop Bascom doubts the historical probity of Sec. 1st, of the book of Discipline; Striking congruity between the caption of the article, and the text of Scripture superadded; Being "a little out of temper," distorts one's fancy; unlimited range of discussion asked and conceded; Points endorsed in the article from the Watchman; Ebullitions of passion; The charge of falsehood repelled, and an explanation asked; A chase after the "Iron Wheel;" Methodist Episcopacy not so ancient as Nebuchadnezer; Extract from a "Methodist Hymn;" John Wesley and Robert Hall; Our civil liberties "so strangely" achieved, despite Mr. Wesley's efforts; contrast between General Washington's responses to the congratulatory address from Methodist Bishops and Baptist Churches; The Munster affair; The "unkind cut," the only method of chastising clerical domination; "Three orders of ministers are recognized;" The "tug of war;" A sad predicament; "Glaring

errors;" Reversing propositions; Constitutional officers of the Episcopal Church not private members; A "solemn demand of an unqualified retraction" declined; The predicament in which the demanded retraction would place "our Episcopacy;" Baptist W. Noel; Endorsement of the answer of the bishops to sundry memorials; The colors struck.

"Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"—PAUL.

Up to this time, our argument has proceeded upon the supposition that the books bearing the *imprimatur* of the "Methodist Book Concern," contained a *faithful* account of the origin of *Episcopacy*, as an organic element in the structure of American Methodism. Its *Episcopacy* is uniformly ascribed to JOHN WESLEY. Our response has been: Suppose we grant this, so far from proving that Methodist Episcopacy is pure Republican Democracy, it seems to us to prove the very reverse. First, Because Mr. Wesley threw the weight of his personal and ministerial character against our revolutionary struggle for independence, as we have already shown; and Secondly, Because he expressly avowed on the part of himself and his societies, in a letter to Mr. Mason, dated "January 13th, 1790," seven or eight years *after* our independence was achieved, "We are no Republicans, and never intend to be." A short extract from that letter will be "to our purpose quite."

"*My Dear Brother:*—As long as I live THE PEOPLE shall have no share in choosing either stewards or leaders among the Methodists. We have not nor never had any such custom. *We are no Republicans, and never intend to be.* It would be better for those who are *so* minded, to go quietly away."—Wesley's Works, vol. vii., p. 98.

We say, granting all that Methodist authors claim,

that Mr. Wesley is their patron saint—their spiritual father in respect of Episcopacy as well as other things—it utterly annihilates their claim to republican Democracy in their ecclesiastical polity.

That Mr. Wesley was the father of *Methodism*, is conceded on all hands. We make this concession to our Methodist brethren with all cheerfulness, since it honorably exonerates Christ and his Apostles from all agency in the construction of that system. It came into being in its present form, *seventeen hundred and eighty-four years after the Christian era*. But that he is the father of *Episcopal Methodism*, is not quite so clear. The truth is, Mr. Wesley was a member and presbyter of the Church of England, and so far as we have ever learned, he never withdrew from it to the day of his death. This we think we can prove beyond all cavil, if it should be contested. His societies were formed *within that Church*, for the purpose of combining more efficiently its piety, and for the individual happiness of the membership, without intending that they should leave its communion.

But whatever may have been his individual views and feelings in this respect, certain it is that he had not the remotest agency in foisting upon his American children the Episcopal feature of their organization. Nay, it was done despite his known views and most solemn remonstrances. This we shall now attempt to prove; but before doing so, let us premise that we shall pursue the main thread of this argument, irrespective of all improper issues or foreign matter. If we were to follow Bro. Hamill, we know not whither he would lead us. We shall, therefore, pursue our train of argument, devoting only such portions of our articles to his communications

as may be essential to the main points at issue between us. We shall try and be kind to his person, but as unmerciful to "our Episcopacy," as the facts in the case, and our powers of reasoning will allow. Our war is not upon Methodists, but upon their Episcopacy. We love our Methodist brethren, because they love our common Lord, and have exhibited a zeal in his cause, worthy of all praise; but we repudiate their Episcopacy, because it is, in our honest judgment, of the earth, earthy—it deprives a Bible constituency of their religious rights—and is in direct contravention to the genius of our free institutions, so far as it can mould the character and habitudes of its votaries in this respect. In the hands of corrupt men, (and who shall undertake to say that such men may never wear its mitre?) it may stain American, as it has already crimsoned European history with crimes of the deepest dye. We fight the *principle* which concedes such power to any men. We claim for our ascended Lord, the supreme legislative power over his Church; and we claim for that Church the authority to expound and apply his already enacted law, to all possible circumstances and conditions, times and places.

In the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, section first, it is affirmed that, as Mr. Wesley "preferred the *Episcopal* mode of Church government to any other, he solemnly set apart, by the imposition of his hands and prayer, one of them, viz: THOMAS COKE, doctor of civil law, late of Jesus College, University of Oxford, and a presbyter of the Church of England, for the *Episcopal* office; and having delivered to him letters of

Episcopal orders, commissioned and directed him to set apart FRANCIS ASBURY, then general assistant of the Methodist Society in America, for the same *Episcopal* office; he the said FRANCIS ASBURY being first ordained deacon and elder." Now, it may seem to be a most unwarrantable assumption on our part to question a declaration so solemnly set forth in the first page of this little volume, containing "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church." But as the word of a bishop or clergyman is not *per se*, infallible—as they are liable to be *mistaken* as well as other men—we propose subjecting this statement to the crucible, to see whether it will come forth as "gold tried in the fire."

In the letter of ordination, which Mr. Wesley furnished to Dr. Coke, there is not the most distant allusion to the office of bishop. We have before us a printed copy of this document—declared by Mr. Drew, in his life of Dr. Coke, to be a "faithful copy, transcribed from the original, in Mr. Wesley's own hand writing, preserved among the papers of the late Dr. Coke." The clause in this letter which defines the office to which Dr. Coke was set apart, reads as follows: "And therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a *superintendent*, by the imposition of my hands and prayers [being assisted by other ordained ministers] Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a presbyter of the Church of England, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work." The letter is dated "this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four," and signed JOHN WESLEY.

Why it is that this "letter of ordination" has never been printed with the minutes of conference, or inserted in the Discipline, is left to the conjecture of the reader. And yet it is the very document on which the bold declarations are made, that Mr. Wesley "preferred the *Episcopal* mode of Church government"—that he set apart Dr. Coke to "the *Episcopal* office"—and that he "commissioned him to set apart Francis Asbury . . . for the same *Episcopal* office." Or if there is any other authority, it has never been produced, though challenged time and again.

In 1791, that is, six or seven years after he was ordained by Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke addressed a letter to Bishop White, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, offering in behalf of himself and Mr. Wesley, to use their "influence to the utmost," which "was not small," to transfer "above 60,000 adults in" the "society in these States; and about 250 travelling ministers and preachers; besides a great number of local preachers, very far excelling the number of travelling preachers," together with the "congregations in these States amounting to 750,000," *provided* Bishop White will consecrate him, Dr. Coke, bishop. Now, why was this overture made, if he had already been "set apart by the imposition of hands and prayers" "to the Episcopal office?" Failing in this overture, Dr. Coke made a similar application to the Lord Bishop of London, about eight years afterwards, declaring that "our numerous societies in America would have been a regular Presbyterian Church, if Mr. Wesley and myself had not taken the steps which we judged it necessary to adopt." But "his Lordship"

would not "impart the Holy Ghost" to the doctor, and there, so far as we know, the matter ended.*

But we have evidence direct and emphatic—such as it would be madness in any sane man to contest—that Mr. Wesley never dreamed while he was setting apart Dr. Coke to the office of superintendent, that that ceremony would ever be metamorphosed into an "*Episcopal ordination*," as the Discipline affirms. Let the reader distinctly observe, that Dr. Coke's "ordination letter" bears date September 2d, A. D. 1784. Four years after this, as the reader will see from the date, Mr. Wesley addressed the following letter to Francis Asbury, whom, the Discipline declares he (Wesley) deputed Dr. Coke to ordain to the "Episcopal Office."

"LONDON, Sept. 20th, 1788.

There is, indeed, a wide difference between the relation wherein you stand to the Americans, and the relation wherein I stand to *all* the Methodists. You are the elder brother of the American Methodists; I am, under God, the father of the whole family. Therefore, I naturally care for you all, in a manner no other person can do. Therefore, I, in a measure, provide for you all; for the supplies which Dr. Coke provides for you, he could not provide were it not for me—were it not that I not only permit him to collect, but support him in so doing.

But in one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the doctor and you differ from me. I study to be *little*, you study to be *great*; I *creep*, you *strut* along; I found a school, you a *college*—nay, and call it after your own names! O beware! Do not cease to be *something*! Let me be nothing, and Christ be all in all.

One instance of this your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you suffer your-

* See Appendix B.

self to be called a *bishop*? I shudder, I start at the very thought. Men may call me a *knave*, or a *fool*, a *rascal*, a *scoundrel*, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a *bishop*! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better.

Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart, and let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

Now, after these solemn declarations on the part of Mr. Wesley, what can we think of the authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for continuing to publish, in every impression of their Discipline, not only that Mr. Wesley "preferred the Episcopal form of their Church government," but that he absolutely did ordain Dr. Coke to the "Episcopal office!" These are *historic facts*—we simply state them, and leave the reader to make his own comments. The *true origin of Episcopacy*, as an organic element in Methodism, as developed in "Lee's History of Methodism," is this:

"In the course of the year (1787) Mr. Asbury reprinted the general minutes, but *in a different form from what they were before*. The title of this pamphlet was as follows:

"A Form of Discipline for the Ministers, Preachers, and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in America; considered and approved at a Conference held at Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, on Monday the

27th day of December, 1784, in which the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., and the Rev. Francis Asbury, presided. Arranged under proper heads, and methodized in a more acceptable manner."

"This was the first time that our superintendents ever gave themselves the title of bishops* in the minutes. They changed the title themselves without the consent of the conference; and at the next conference they asked the preachers if the word *bishop* might stand in the minutes, seeing it was a scriptural name, and the meaning of the word *bishop* was the same with that of superintendent.

"Some of the preachers opposed the alteration, and wished to retain the former title, but a majority of the preachers wished to let the word *bishop* remain."—*Lee's History of Methodism*, page 128.

The above will account for Mr. Wesley's letter to Mr. Asbury, in 1788, the year after the title of bishop was assumed instead of superintendent, in which he says, "Men may call me a knave, or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a *bishop*! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this!"

Now, let the reader observe, that the next year after Mr. Wesley wrote this letter to Mr. Asbury, the very first question and answer on the minutes of Conference are the following:

"Who are the persons that exercise the *Episcopal* office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America?

* It is somewhat remarkable that as soon as Mr. Wesley's name is left out of the minutes, the term bishop was introduced into them.

"ANS. JOHN WESLEY, Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury."

It is fair to presume that Mr. Asbury had Mr. Wesley's letter at the time he and Dr. Coke were presiding at the Conference of 1789; for in his Journal, vol. ii. p. 45, we find the following entry:

"1789.—South Carolina, March 15th. We reached the city, having rode two hundred miles in about five days and two hours. Here I received a *bitter pill* from one of my greatest friends." We suppose this "*bitter pill*" was the above letter. Now what right had Messrs. Coke and Asbury and the American Conference to connect the name of John Wesley with a title against which he had protested in such unmeasured terms—a title, rather than wear which, he would choose to be called "a knave, a fool, a rascal, or a scoundrel?" It was certainly due the old man, that his name should not be mentioned in any such connection. If they were determined to adopt the Episcopal form of government, it was obviously incumbent on them to have taken the responsibility on themselves, and allowed their minutes to speak the *truth*. But instead of this, the letter was suppressed, and its contents, so far as they were concerned, never would have seen the light of day. Nay, the first thing done at the Conference next preceding the reception of this letter, was, solemnly and before God, to publish to the world the name of JOHN WESLEY as a *bishop* of the Methodist Church! "His name was used," says the Rev. Mr. McCaine, who was thirty years an elder in that Church, "to give a degree of sanction to their measures, which it was thought would disarm resistance, if any were offered; and by this means was

an Episcopal government established; the name of John Wesley being offered as a passport to all the contemplated ecclesiastical honors."

Now, let us apply the foregoing facts to our argument. The "Discipline" alleges that Mr. Wesley "preferred the *Episcopal* form of government,"—Mr. Wesley solemnly protests that he had rather be called "*a knave, a fool, a rascal, or a scoundrel,*" than to be called *bishop!* The "Discipline" declares that he ordained Dr. Coke to the "*Episcopal office*"—neither the word *Episcopal* nor *bishop* occurs in the ordination letter. The "Discipline" avers that he commissioned Dr. Coke to ordain Francis Asbury to the "*same Episcopal office*"—four years after the date of said letter of ordination, he (Wesley) writes to Mr. Asbury, "For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this"—["suffering yourself to be called a *bishop.*"] The "Discipline" affirms that the Episcopal mode of government was adopted in 1784, the year on which it is assumed Dr. Coke appeared in America with letters of *Episcopal* authority from Mr. Wesley— and yet seven years after this, to-wit, in 1791, Dr. Coke applied to Bishop White for ordination to that office; and in 1799, he made a similar application to the Lord Bishop of London—that is he made two unsuccessful efforts to be ordained to the office of bishop, AFTER both the "Discipline" and the Minutes of Conference solemnly declare, that he was a bishop! What a pity the holy link in the succession could not have been supplied! What an awful disaster, that in attempting to stretch it across the ocean, the mystic chain snapped asunder!

Suppose we place two or three of these documents in juxtaposition, and see how beautifully they will harmonize:

LOOK AT THIS:

Discipline, pages 1-2.

"As he (Mr. Wesley) preferred the *Episcopal* mode of Church government to any other, he solemnly set apart, by the imposition of his hands and prayers, one of them, viz: THOMAS COKE, doctor of civil law, late of Jesus College, in the University of Oxford, and a Presbyterian of the Church of England, for the *Episcopal* office; and having delivered to him letters of *Episcopal* orders, commissioned and directed him to set apart FRANCIS ASBURY, then general assistant of the Methodist Society in America, for the same *Episcopal* office," etc.

Minutes of Conference for 1789.

"Who are the persons that exercise the *Episcopal* office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America?

"Ans. John Wesley, Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury."

AND THEN AT THIS:

Extract from Mr. Wesley's letter to Mr. Asbury, dated "London, Sept. 20, 1788.

* * * * One instance of this your greatness gives me great concern. How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called *bishop*? I SHUDDER, I START at the very thought. Men may call me a knave, or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a *bishop*! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this. * * * *

I am your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

But if we should be considered uncharitable in doubting the authority of a fact which constitutes the foundation stone of the Methodist polity—if the members of that communion should feel "grieved and insulted" as

some political editors say, that we should not exercise *implicit faith* in declarations solemnly made by the authorities of that Church just as often as there are impressions in the "Discipline" now extant—we beg to summon to our rescue a man whom they will hear—the late Bishop Bascom. In Dr. Bond's *Economy of Methodism*, he quotes Dr. Bascom as saying, "But Mr. Wesley seems not to have contemplated an Episcopacy in any shape. It is, to be sure, asserted in the preface to our Book of Discipline; but the oldest preachers in the United States, with whom I have conversed and corresponded on this subject, *never saw the warrant*. It has been called for by *friends* and *foes* for thirty years, *but it is not yet forthcoming*. If such warrant exists, *why is it that we can learn nothing of it?* But until such warrant or document from Mr. Wesley be procured, *I, as an individual, must of necessity, continue to doubt the historical probity of the Preface of our Book of Discipline*, in relation to this particular."—*Economy of Methodism*, p. 114.

We claim, then, that Bishop Bascom shall share equally with us the odium of this incredulity. If a Baptist editor commits an unpardonable offence in "doubting the historical probity of the Preface of our Book of Discipline," it is not a little consoling to him to know that a Methodist *bishop*—the eloquent Bascom—is equally condemned with him to endure the bitter penalty of that terrible offence.

And here we must pause in this argument, for the purpose of paying our respects to Brother Hamill's third letter.

And first, the reader will observe a most beautiful congruity between the caption of his article, "Methodism, like its Creed—peace and good will to man," and the passage of Scripture he has chosen for a motto—"Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." The amiable spirit—the "peace and good will to man" of Methodism, consists, then, in denouncing those who question the right of bishops and clergy to legislate for the Churches, as "presumptuous, self-willed—not afraid to speak evil of dignities." That is to say, if any person sees proper to suggest that it would be more in accordance with the genius of our free institutions, for the governed to have some voice in the government—that power, whether civil or ecclesiastical, in the hands of an exclusive class of men, irresponsible to any other power for its exercise, naturally tends to accumulation and corruption—he must be classed with those to whom Peter refers in this passage, to wit: "Those who walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government." Of course, Brother Hamill designs this application of the passage, or he would not prefix it to his article.

Our brother seems to be a little out of temper. We said in our former article, that we should rule out every thing foreign in this discussion. He understands us as meaning that we would mutilate his manuscripts to suit our views of relevancy. Not so fast, Bro. Hamill. We simply meant that, according to the common rules of debate, you had no moral right to introduce foreign matters; and that if you did, it was not incumbent on us to leave the main question under discussion, and follow all your aberrations from the point or points at is-

sue between us. Your *restiveness* on this subject furnishes an impressive illustration of the fact, that Methodist clergymen brook no sort of control when engaged with an alien, or, as your motto suggests, "the presumptuous and self-willed." Go on, brother. Whatever you write, whether it be on that horrible practice of "close communion," or the "Munster insurrectionists," or, if you should choose to give us your views of "Mormonism" as brother Ferguson has done (see last paper), we will print it all, without the "displacement of a single word." All we have to say is, *that we do not exactly see the pertinancy of such topics to the subject we are discussing.*

You charge us with endorsing the following odious articles from the 'Watchman:' "Methodist Episcopacy is a foe to human rights:" the very point we are discussing, Brother Hamill. How could we take the ground that Methodist Episcopacy is anti-Republican, without regarding it as a "foe to human rights?" Further, that "it exerts a paralyzing influence over freedom of thought"—if suspension and expulsion from your Church for discussing "the mutual rights of ministers and members paralyzes freedom of thought," we humbly submit that we have proved this beyond the possibility of a cavil. "It has imposed articles of faith upon the people, without their consent." Yes, sir, it has. Where and when have the local ministers and private members of your Church, individually or collectively, in their own persons or by representatives, delegated the right to your bishops and travelling preachers, to "impose articles of faith" upon them? If such right ever has been conceded, it can be proved. "Methodists degrade themselves by submission to bishops, in regard to Church

property, more than Roman Catholics." The famous suit brought by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to recover their proportion of funds in the "Book Concern," was decided by our civil authorities on the ground, that the property of the Church vested in its bishops and clergy; whereas Catholic congregations have contested this very point before the same tribunal with success. This we will either prove or retract. "Our bishops control our public moneys and buildings." The writer in the Watchman asks and answers thus: "Who holds the deeds for every inch of ground, and every Episcopal Methodist Church in the land? *The Conference alias the bishops.*" Will Brother Hamill deny this? If so, the proof is at hand to any amount. Finally, the bishops "can control the suffrages of our members," &c. This is not stated as a fact, but as a proposition to be argued from facts. And whether the writer proved it or not, is left to the judgment of the reader. Brother Hamill is the last man on earth who ought to charge us with "twisting in and twisting out."

After we had extended to Brother Hamill all the courtesies he asked—allowing him, nay welcoming him, to the unrestricted use of our columns, a privilege that we still accord to him—and in all our allusions to him, using terms of the utmost respect—we say, after all this, judge of our surprise at the following declaration: "Of what *you* allege against Methodism, I must *deliberately say to you*, they are *all and each of them* UTTERLY FALSE. For proof, see my first article, which you have barely deigned to notice." We had hoped, Bro. Hamill, that you were a stranger to Grub-street vernacular—

that your Bro. Ferguson, had monopolized that department "of our Episcopacy." What *we* have alleged against Methodism is "UTTERLY FALSE!"—is it? Let us see. We have said that the Annual and Quadrennial Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church are composed *ex officio*, of the bishops and travelling clergy; that neither local preachers nor private members have any voice in their deliberations; that the basis of representation in the General Conference is not the numerical strength of the membership of the Churches, but of the travelling preachers; that this distinct feature of Methodism is never to be changed, since the "fathers of the Church have taken the pains to throw around it the sanctity of an irrevocable decree;" that in neither the legislative, executive or judicial departments of government in your Church, have the laity any representative; the Methodist Episcopacy deprives the membership of the Methodist Church of the right to choose their own pastors—a right as dear to the "Lord's freed men" as any other he has conferred; that Mr. Wesley, the father of Methodism, after spending a portion of his time among our Colonies, before the Revolutionary War, and acquiring a commanding influence among them, on account of his talents and piety, threw the whole weight of that influence against our struggle for national independence, and declared on the part of himself and friends, many years after the war was ended—"We are no Republicans, and never intend to be;" that several of his preachers had to flee the country during that war, on account of their Tory principles, and that Mr. Asbury, the first Methodist bishop ordained in America, had to conceal himself from the popular fury for the same rea-

son; that large numbers of official and private members of the Methodist Episcopal Church were suspended and expelled for promoting a movement in that Church, to incorporate into its polity the great REPRESENTATIVE idea of our civil government; that a respectful petition was presented to the General Conference, in 1824, praying "that the government of the Church might be made *representative*, and more in accordance with the mutual rights of the ministers and the people," and that the petition was met by the stern rebuke of the bishops. "*Pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges,*" we say these are substantially the points we had "alleged against Methodism," up to the time Brother Hamill wrote his present article. ARE THEY "UTTERLY FALSE?" But perhaps we have mistaken the punctuation of our brother; perhaps he designs the charge to refer only to the article from the "Watchman." If so, the reader can judge, after reading both articles, how far the writer of that article has been convicted of falsehood.

We are not defending Brother GRAVES—he is able to do that himself—but discussing Methodist Episcopacy. We must, therefore, wait until our brother returns from chasing the "great iron wheel."

We said that ecclesiastical power had been invoked by secular princes, to establish and perpetuate their thrones—as well as to carry out some of their basest purposes—and lo! Brother Hamill asks, "Did Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander, Tiberius, the Sultan, &c. &c. &c., owe their thrones to—American Methodism? Not at all. True, we used to hear a long metre hymn in our boyish days, one stanza of which ran thus:

"The world, the Calvinists, and Paine,
May hate the Methodists in vain;
Their doctrines shall be downward hurled,
The Methodists will take the world."

But we never dreamed that Methodism reached quite so far back into antiquity as Nebuchadnezzar. True, we were aware that that renowned king became quite orthodox once, and because some of his subjects chose to worship God contrary to the royal "ritual," "knowing no such right, and comprehending no such privilege," he dealt with them after the true spirit of Episcopacy, as exhibited in the Romish and English Churches. Perhaps it was some such association of ideas as this that brought up the image of this Babylonish monarch to our brother's fruitful imagination.

The difference between John Wesley and Robert Hall, was this: Mr. Wesley sent out "superintendents," and Missionaries inimical to our cause, and visited in person our Colonies, and then used the influence thus obtained, against our struggle with Great Britain for independence. Robert Hall never did this. His political tracts show what his sympathies were. But Mr. Wesley "judged it best that" we "should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God had *so strangely* set us free!" Very "nobly spoken" indeed! "God has made them free," despite Mr. Wesley's efforts to the contrary. And then it was "*so strangely*" done! If the good old man could only have "known the rights and comprehended the privileges" for which we were contending, perhaps it would not have been so strange after all.*

* See Appendix A.

But then the Methodists presented a congratulatory address to General Washington, on his accession to the Presidency. This was quite patriotic; but not more so than similar addresses from other religious bodies, two of whom were before them, if Jared Sparks is right in the arrangement of the Washington papers. But if our brother dwells with so much rapture upon the General's response to this address, in which he "implored the divine benediction on" their "religious community," into what ecstasies would it have thrown him, if he had read in that response the following:—"While I recollect with satisfaction that the religious society of which you are members, have been, throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously, the firm friends to civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of our glorious Revolution; I cannot hesitate to believe that they will be the faithful supporters of a free yet efficient general government."* Yet this was in his response to

* On the accession of General Washington to the Presidency of the United States, the various religious denominations of the country, in connection with other bodies, presented congratulatory addresses to him, to which he uniformly responded in respectful terms. The following are his answers, "to the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States," and "to the General Committee representing the United Baptist Churches in Virginia." They are extracted from "*The Writings of Washington*," vol. xii, pp. 153-155.

"*To the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church
in the United States.*—May, 1789.

"GENTLEMEN:—I return to you individually, and through you to your Society collectively in the United States, my thanks for the

similar "congratulatory" address from the Baptists. But we shall make no invidious comparisons.

The Munster affair of Germany, in the sixteenth century, is also dragged into this discussion. It is done

demonstrations of affection and the expressions of joy, offered in their behalf, on my late appointment. It shall still be my endeavor to manifest, by overt acts, the purity of my inclinations for promoting the happiness of mankind, as well as the sincerity of my desires to contribute whatever may be in my power towards the preservation of the civil and religious liberties of the American people. In pursuing this line of conduct, I hope, by the assistance of Divine providence, not altogether to disappoint the confidence which you have been pleased to repose in me.

"It always affords me satisfaction, when I find a concurrence in sentiment and practice between all conscientious men in acknowledgements of homage to the great Governor of the Universe, and in professions of support to a just civil government. After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, will have occasion to be convinced that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion, I must assure you in particular, that I take in the kindest part, the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the throne of grace for me, and that I likewise implore the Divine benediction on yourselves and your religious community.

GEORGE WASHINGTON."

"To the General Committee representing the

United Baptist Churches in Virginia—May, 1789.

"GENTLEMEN:—I request you will accept my best acknowledgements for your congratulation on my appointment to the first office in the nation. The kind manner in which you mention my past conduct equally claims the expression of gratitude.

"After we had, by the smiles of heaven on our exertions, obtained the object for which we contended, I retired, at the conclusion of the war, with an idea that my country could have no further occa

with many palliations and qualifications—but still it is done. We intend to notice this at a proper time; but as it is not *vitally* connected with Methodist Episcopacy, we dismiss it for the present.*

alon for my services, and with the intention of never again entering into public life; but, when the exigencies of my country seemed to require me once more to engage in public affairs, an honest conviction of my duty superseded my former resolution, and became my apology for deviating from the happy plan which I had adopted.

“If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension, that the constitution formed in the convention, where I had the honor to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it; and if I could now conceive that the general government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded, that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny, and every species of religious persecution. For you doubtless remember, that I have often expressed my sentiments, that every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone, for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience.

“While I recollect with satisfaction, that the religious society of which you are members, have been, throughout America, uniformly and almost unanimously the firm friends to civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of our glorious revolution, I cannot hesitate to believe, that they will be the faithful supporters of a free, yet efficient general government. Under this pleasing expectation, I rejoice to assure them, that they may rely on my best wishes and endeavors to advance their prosperity.

“In the meantime be assured, gentlemen, that I entertain a proper sense of your fervent supplications to God for my temporal and eternal happiness.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.”

* See Appendix C.

As Brother Hamill persists in confounding Methodist with Bible Episcopacy, we shall devote an article to that subject at an early day. We must correct an erroneous impression on our brother's mind, in regard to a question or two we asked: "In the Methodist polity, does the Holy Ghost or the bishops appoint the overseers? Or are bishop and Holy Ghost identical terms?" "Ah," exclaims our brother, "that was the unkindest cut of all!" Now, God forbid that we should speak unkindly of any one, more especially of a New Testament bishop. We reverence such a man, wherever we see him. Paul has described him in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus—portions of holy writ which have been the themes for ordination services among most Protestants, time out of mind. Such a minister we honor, no matter to what denomination he belongs. But when even a good man thrusts himself, or permit others to thrust him into a position not of God's bidding; when man shall attempt to create a "dignitary" in the Church of Christ, higher in authority than either the Church or those whom the "Holy Ghost has made *bishops*;" who assumes the prerogative "to change, receive and suspend preachers as necessity may require, and as the Discipline directs; to fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits; to oversee the *spiritual* AND TEMPORAL business of the Church; to hear and decide appeals of the quarterly meeting Conferences, on questions of law; to choose the presiding elders, to fix their stations, and to *change them* when he judges it necessary," &c., &c.; we say, when such a dignitary is obtruded into the sacred precincts of Zion—"lording it over God's clergy" (for that is the signification of *kleros* in Greek,

and so old Wickliffe translated it)—it is not “unkind” in us to rebuke the intruder, even if we should use the stern language of Virgil’s priest,

“Procul hinc! procul este, profani,
• • • Totoque abssistite lucro!”

Is it not *true* that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church appoint the “overseers” in that Church? Is it not true that in the New Testament economy, Paul affirms that the Holy Ghost appoints these “overseers?” And when man assumes the prerogatives of that Spirit, the inquiry is pertinent, whether such authority is identical with that of the Holy Ghost.

As Brother Hamill still maintains that there are but two orders of clergy in his Church, we quote two others of his Church authorities on that subject. Drs. Emory and Bangs, in “Buck’s Theological Dictionary,” say—“THREE ORDERS of ministers ARE recognized, and the duties peculiar to each are clearly defined.” We suppose these eminent doctors, when writing an article for a standard work, which was intended to give a faithful account of what Methodism is, would not be likely to have mistaken *two* for *three*.

But now “comes the tug of war.” Brother Hamill says—“It now becomes my *painful* duty to correct a whole series of the most *palpable misrepresentation of facts* I have ever known made by an educated and respectable minister.” And then, after convicting us to *his own entire satisfaction*, concludes by making the following very modest and delicate demand: “I now formally *demand* (!) of you” (Episcopal to the core!) “as an hon-

est man, a *solemn* and *unqualified* retraction of your *glaring errors* in the points specified!"

On reading this, we really felt our humble self in the predicament of an old poet:

"To *laugh* were want of goodness and of grace;
And to be *grave*, exceeds all power of face."

The "points" we suggested are these: That in the English Church, the powers of government are in the hands of the clergy; that the power of ordination is vested in the hands of its bishops; that the right of supplying the Churches with pastors, was in the same hands; that in her ecclesiastical councils (chapters they are called) the laity are not represented; that the revenues of the Church, collected from the people, pass beyond their constitutional control into the hands of its rulers; and that the right of suffrage is denied to its private members. All these, with a single exception, as they relate to the Church of England, are "*palpable misrepresentations of facts!*" Then the converse of each one of them, except one, is true! Let us see how they will sound. In the Church of England, the powers of government are not in the hands of the clergy, *i. e.* it is *not* Episcopacy, since Episcopacy means, according to Webster, (pardon us, brother, for introducing Webster again, if you please, as it is a prevailing opinion that he is competent to define a common English word,) "the government of the Church by bishops or prelates." That the right of supplying the Churches with pastors is *not* in Episcopal hands—then the Churches have a right to choose their own pastors! True, the Crown,

the lords of the manor throughout the realm, ecclesiastical corporations, dignitaries, and college Churches, as by constitutional law, officially connected with "THE CHURCH," have the right to nominate persons to the various benefices within their several jurisdictions; but the *confirmation* of these nominations is in the hands of the bishops. So we understand the following, from the Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge, Art. Episcopacy. "The jurisdiction of a bishop, in England, consists in collating to benefices" (presenting to benefices), "granting institutions on the PRESENTATIONS OF OTHER PATRONS; commanding induction; taking care of the profits of vacant benefices for the use of the successors," &c.

Now, if we can understand the language of Episcopacy (though no very great adept in the "speech of Ashdod"), the above clearly shows, that an appointment to a benefice by "other patrons" must be confirmed by a bishop before the appointee can legally enter upon his office. And moreover, the point we were seeking to establish was, that the Churches, as such, in the establishment, had no right to choose their pastors. It would seem that it was impossible for our brother to have mistaken our meaning. But to proceed with the "points specified." In the ecclesiastical councils of the English Church the laity ARE represented! That is, Episcopacy, is *not* Episcopacy! "A dean and chapter," says Buck, "are the bishop's council, to assist him in the affairs of religion;"—a "dean presides over at least ten canons or prebendaries;" a chapter is "a community of ecclesiastics belonging to a Cathedral or college Church." The revenues of the Church, collected from the people,

do not pass beyond their constitutional control, notwithstanding, Mr. Noel's averment that all "persons holding titheable property must contribute to the maintenance of the clergy, whether they approve of the contribution or not"—Methodists, Baptists, all non-conformists—they all have the "control" of their funds, after the payment is "enforced by process of law!" And finally, that the right of suffrage is not denied to its private members! Then they can act with the "council to assist him (the bishop) in the affairs of religion," by their chosen representatives, at least! All this we are asked to do! to *reverse* our original propositions!!

Now, we did not take it upon ourselves to inform our readers that the Church of England was established by law, and that the crown, by consequence, was the highest recognized officer—the head—of that Church. We really thought we might take it for granted that this was known by men of common intelligence. In the days of King Henry VIII, the right of appointing the Archbishop of Canterbury, the highest ecclesiastic in the realm, belonged to the crown. But when Elizabeth came to the throne, because the Scriptures declared that a woman was not permitted to speak in the Church, this prerogative was waved by the Queen, and the appointment of that dignitary, ever since, we believe, has devolved upon the "chapter."

Must we say to Brother Hamill, that the constitutional officers of the Church of England, whether they be king, queen, lords, noblemen, or patrons, are not private members? If the laws of the realm invest them with a portion of Episcopal authority, whether they are

preachers or not, are they not part and parcel of that Episcopacy? Is not the Crown the great embodiment of this Episcopacy—the head of the Church—defender of the faith? Are official members of Churches to be regarded as private members, simply because they do not preach?

Sincerely do we thank Bro. Hamill for his quotations from Mr. Noel. The reader has in these extracts a pretty fair portraiture of the corruptions and tendencies of Episcopacy. What Episcopacy in England now is, Episcopacy in America may be hereafter. Read these extracts from Mr. Noel again, and then say what are we to expect from the daughter, when the mother practices such abominations as these? There may be “lay management to the fullest extent” if the constitutional officers of the Church are laymen; but we submit, there is not much lay representation in that management.

Shall we make an “unqualified retraction” of these “glaring errors,” Brother Hamill? We should like to do so on several accounts. First, we should like to please you in such an affair. We do not like to disobey clerical “demands.” Secondly, if we could do so, it would wonderfully strengthen our argument in regard to the anti-Republican nature and tendencies of Methodist Episcopacy. For the sake of strengthening this argument, we could wish—sincerely wish—that you could prove that we were mistaken in every one of these points. In that case you would succeed in proving what? Why that an Established Church in a Monarchical Government, is more Democratic in its structure than the Methodist Episcopal Church of the free Commonwealth of the United States! Shall we “retract”

and leave your Church "alone in its glory?" No; we cannot do so, until we have some better evidence that we are mistaken, than has yet been furnished.

The sum and substance of all these extracts from Mr. Noel, may be stated in a few words. The Episcopal authority in the English Church, whether in the hands of the Crown, lords, noblemen, prelates, or what not, as its constitutional officers, is corrupt and corrupting—as it is not amenable to the people, no check can be interposed upon its abominations—its piety is a libel upon the Christian name—and therefore, although holding a high position among its dignitaries, he withdrew from it, and connected himself with the Baptists, and was soon followed by several hundred members of his former charge.

As we are not arguing the congruity of the Methodist Episcopacy with English monarchy, we leave our friend to present as many points of contrast between an English king and a Methodist bishop, as his imagination can supply.

And so you endorse the answer your bishops gave to the memorials of local preachers and private members, praying for the right of representation in the law-making councils of your Church—"Pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges!" Well, we do not wonder that you have struck your usual caption from your articles, "Methodist Episcopacy nor anti-Republican." How a government, whose constitutional authorities can answer a petition from its citizens asking to be represented in its legislative, executive, and judicial departments, that they "know no such rights, that they comprehended no such privileges,"

can nevertheless be Democratic or Republican, would puzzle a Jesuit to see. We are not astonished, therefore that Brother Hamill has taken down *that* sign.

But our space will not allow us to proceed further. We say in conclusion, that the publication of these articles in some one or more of the Methodist journals, is left entirely to the negotiations of Brother Hamill.

June 7th, 1855.

LETTER IV.

METHODISM, "FAIR AS THE MOON, CLEAR AS THE SUN, TERRIBLE AS AN ARMY, WITH BANNERS."

More twisting; Encouraging admissions; Mr. Noel on government of the English Church by worldly politicians; A queer Parliamentary Episcopacy; Danger of Methodist Episcopacy being controlled by the State as English Episcopacy is; Retraction refused; Fate of those who would mend our doctrines; Bishop Asbury's claim upon the Methodist Book Concern; Challenge to publish a Church deed; Freedom of speech again; Parallels upon the title of bishop; Dr. Coke's injudicious application for re-ordination; Father Jesse Mercer's opinion of a Ministers' Conference; The strange representation of the Southern Baptist Convention; A Quarterly Conference metamorphosed into another Episcopacy; Prerogatives of the laity; Reasoning which will determine the funny problem; The Methodist Church government resembles our civil government more closely than the Baptist Church government does, proved by several logical arguments; Twenty Baptist Ministers in Canada, threw off the yoke of close communion; John Bunyan's, Baptist Abel's, and Robert Hall's abhorrence of the same yoke; Connectionalism of Methodism; A Baptist excommunicated for joining a sister Church; Beauties of the Republicanism of the Alabama Baptists, as portrayed by their own historian, Rev. H. Holcombe; A gracious privilege rescinded; Anti-Republican resolutions of sixteen Baptist churches; A Baptist's opinion of the persecuting spirit of the Claiborne Baptist Church; The Alabama Baptist State Convention votes that an infernal spirit gets into every Baptist community however small; Paternal chastise-

ment; Baptist inquisitorial taxation without representation; The penalty; The *modus operandi* of assessment; Uncommon submissiveness; Burns; If Baptists are not equal to angels, a civil government, framed after their model of Church government, would not do; Anecdote.

"Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee."—LUKE.

BROTHER HENDERSON:

We are gratified that you "love our Methodist brethren, because they love our common Lord, and have exhibited a zeal in his cause worthy of all praise." A good tree bringeth forth good fruit. How does this declaration square with your "honorably exonerating (of) Christ and his Apostles from all agency in the construction of Methodism." More twisting, my dear brother. Still we accept gratefully the—all praise for zeal in the Lord's cause, and leave the twistification in your undisturbed possession.

Admission after admission of the excellence of our system, falls almost unconsciously from your lips. Our love and zeal for the Lord, so praiseworthy—"we are as good Democrats and Republicans as any in the land"—"the credit of it (our glorious itinerancy] belongs to all forms of Church government"—you no longer "argue the congruity of Methodist Episcopacy with English monarchy." Really this is encouraging; it fully recompenses me for the task of rectifying your opinion of our excellent Church government. I continue this hopeful work.

Let Mr. Noel inform you more perfectly of the power of English bishops, in confirming the nominations of lay patrons to benefices. "Deans and chapters refuse to

elect the prime-minister's nominee, each member of the chapter is liable to the intolerable penalties of a *præmunire*. No cases of a refusal occur, the patronage of a prime-minister carries him through all difficulties." p. 181. Hear Queen Elizabeth's threat to the Bishop of Ely; "Proud prelate, you know what you were before I made you what you are; if you do not immediately comply with my request, by God, I will immediately unfrock you." Noel, p. 47. Again: you wish to know "if the laws of the realm invest them (Queen, Lords, Parliaments, &c.) with a portion of Episcopal authority, are they not part and parcel of Episcopacy;" Ha! ha! Episcopacy, indeed! You are like one who has had a hard fall: objects multiply before your vision. Hear Noel once more: "Anglican Churches are placed under the ecclesiastical government of worldly politicians, assembled in Parliament, including Roman Catholics and Unitarians." p. 400. How do you like this lay delegation? You answer, "An Established Church in England is more Democratic than the Methodist Church in the United States." That is to say, an union of Church and State is better Democracy than a separation of Church and State. Well done, Brother Henderson! I did not think you capable of making so anti-Republican an avowal! We do certainly eschew all such Democracy as that. You think "what Episcopacy in England now is, Episcopacy in America may be." Fie! fie! Brother Henderson. Pray do not charge our civil government with the design of uniting Church and State.

You ran a parallel between the Methodist Church and the Church of England. I showed you, upon the autho-

rity of Mr. Noel, the marked contrast, in specified points, between the Churches, and asked of your candor a retraction of the comparison. You evade the issue, and refuse it. Let the public judge between us.

You re-assert that "we impose articles of faith upon our people without their consent." Now, it is known to the world that every one who joins our Church, voluntarily subscribes to the articles of our faith, which cannot be changed by any Church power whatever: because they are Bible truths. Does not a candidate for membership in your Church do the same thing? If any joins us, who will be "carried about with every wind of doctrine," and

"Who think religion is intended
For nothing else than to be mended,"—HUDIBRAS.

we are soon happily relieved by the first proselyter who comes along, and bears away his dupe triumphantly.

The Methodist Book Concern is not the property of the bishops, as you wrongfully state; it is held by the entire body of ministers in the several Conferences, for specified purposes: first, the dissemination of religious literature; and secondly, that the profits of the Concern, if any, shall be supplied to the relief of the deficient or distressed preachers, and the widows and orphans of the holy dead. Bishop Asbury, one of its founders, the man who soared so gloriously to the tops of the highest mountains, in extreme poverty, to preach the Gospel, said, "I am resolved not to claim any property in the Book Concern; it shall be sacred to invalid preachers." &c. Every solitary contributor to this fund, contributed to it with the express understanding that it should be

so used. Is it, then, anti-Republican to obey the voice of the people who created it, in carrying out their wishes in this useful and sacred charity? Catholic congregations have never contested any such point. They have no Book Concern at all, that I know of. With regard to Church buildings, I now call on you to publish the deed of any Methodist Church in the land, and let the public see for themselves whether your charge is true or false. Is it *Grub-street* vernacular to pronounce utterly false, the charge that bishops can control the suffrages of our members? ! !

Your own articles prove our unlimited freedom of speech; from them we learn that the Methodists have a queer way of punishing freedom of speech, by making the disaffected, such as McKendree and Bascom, bishops! The noble ladies whose relatives were expelled, tell us themselves, their kindred were "denounced as backsliders and disturbers of the peace." And your own Baptist Discipline says, p. 20—"When a member breaks the peace of the Church by janglings and disputings, he shall be suspended." Your verbose attack upon the mere title of our bishops, I summarily dispose of in the following parallels:

LOOK AT THIS:

"I firmly believe I am a scriptural *Episcopos*, as much as any man in England."—*John Wesley*.

"Their father in the Lord may be called the *bishop* or overseer of them all.—*Jno. Wesley*.—*Watts' Wesley*, p. 135.

"A bishop must be blameless." *Paul*.

THEN AT THIS:

He solemnly set apart Thomas Coke, a presbyter of the Church of England, for the Episcopal office."—*Methodist Discipline*.

"The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person to the office of *bishop* or elder in the Church."—*Baptist Discipline*, p. 56.

It is objected that Mr. Wesley reproved Mr. Asbury for assuming the title of bishop, though he thought himself a Scriptural *Episcopos*. To the assumption of the title, simply, because of its abuse, I allow Mr. Wesley was opposed, but not to the thing signified by it. And our American brethren showed a *laudable independence of Mr. Wesley*, in preferring the scriptural term, bishop, to its synonym, superintendent. But neither Mr. Wesley, nor the Baptist Discipline, nor Paul meant to call those who were to be styled bishops rather than superintendents, either knaves, fools, or rascals. Bishop Asbury kindly says, "These unpleasant expressions of the devil old man, (were) occasioned by the misrepresentations of others." What a tempest did you awake to waft a feather!

Dr. Coke injudiciously, perhaps, would have submitted to re-ordination, just as Timothy allowed Paul to circumcise him, not because he would not have been a good minister, or bishop without it, but to enlarge his influence.

Upon the subject of "a Conference Episcopacy"—of ministers, hear Father Jesse Mercer, that good old Georgia Baptist, *Memorial*, p. 269: "If all the ministers of the order in the State, had at once formed a *Ministers' Meeting*, with a view to maintain the unity of the faith in the Churches, and had co-operated in the work of the ministry, all those distracting controversies which have broken the peace, and spoiled the beauty of our Churches, would have been prevented." Was this anti-Republican?

Methodism delights in lay delegation, in all matters wherein the laity are equally concerned with the minis-

try—in financial, missionary, and other boards. But we guard against such an irregular representation as formed the constituents of your last Southern Convention, in Montgomery. In that Convention, called Southern, and in which, therefore, fourteen States should have been nearly equally represented, there were two hundred and four delegates; one from Florida, none from Texas, &c., and ninety-four of them from Alabama. Now suppose our Congress had two hundred and four delegates, and only four of them from Virginia, one from Florida, none from Texas, &c., would you call this a Representative Congress? I trow not.

You are pleased to term our Quarterly Conference, "an Episcopacy." Ha! ha! And if the party himself, who feels aggrieved, carries his case before it, it is anti-Republican! I suppose you know our highest authorities condemn a reference. Once more allow me to say of the judicial and executive power of our laity—without the vote of the laity, none can be licensed to preach; none can be received into the itinerancy; none can be received into the Church. As I myself received *by vote of the Church*, fourteen into full connection, on the very Sabbath before your article appeared, affirming the membership had no voice in this matter. I add also, that the suffrages of the laity are indispensable in every Church act, in every one of the thousands of our Churches. Besides their management in all our grand enterprises.

I have now followed you step by step, and examined thoroughly and fairly, the ground of your charge, first, against our bishops; secondly, against what you term our Conference Episcopacy; and lastly, against your newly-invented Quarterly Conference Episcopacy; and

I find your accusation of anti-Republicanism, in every case utterly groundless. If therefore, you still imagine Methodism anti-Republican, a similar style of reasoning will determine your funny problem, of the distance of a kitchen fifteen feet square from the spring—it will prove anything.

I now affirm that the Methodist Church government, resembles more closely our civil government than the Baptist Church government. In proof of this, I use the *argumentum ad hominem*—recognized in logic as a legitimate argument. I state it thus: Our Federal, and I might add, our State government, is Republican. That which approximates most closely to it, is most Republican. But the Methodist Church government is more nearly after this model, than the Baptist Church government; therefore, the Methodist Church is more Republican than the Baptist Church. Now for the proof, that the Methodist Church is more perfectly after this Republican model. The Methodist Church does not usurp authority over the conscience of her members, in debarring them from holy communion with their orthodox brethren, at the Lord's table; but the Baptist Church does deprive them of this Christian liberty. In this respect, American Baptists are far behind; perhaps, a majority of their English brethren. Those great lights of your Church, John Bunyan, Baptist Noel, and Robert Hall, abhorred the practice of close communion; and the last named, expressed himself in indignant terms in reference to the tyranny of this practice. I know not whether your members chafe under this restriction, but I do know, that constituted as my mind is, it would be impossible for the Methodist Episcopacy, and entire

Church, to place upon my neck so galling a yoke as this—which forbade me to commune with my dearest kindred, were they never so pious, if they followed not with us. Twenty Baptist ministers in Canada have recently resolved to submit no longer to this arbitrary dominion over their conscience. No power could compel me to debar from the Lord's table Christians whom I knew to be living temples of the Holy Ghost, even if I thought their baptism utterly defective. If, therefore, liberty be at all synonymous with Republicanism, we are certainly in this respect, more Republican than the Baptist Church.

Again: "Each Baptist Church is not subject to the cognizance of any synod or council whatever; nor have Associations any Church power properly so called, nor any jurisdiction over the Churches themselves—to exercise any censure," &c. Baptist Discipline, p. 58. If therefore, our civil government were framed on this plan, we would have no legislature properly so called, nor judiciary, nor executive, and hence no government at all; our country would be a vast chain of broken neighborhoods, perfectly denationalized. But the connectionalism of Methodism, binds us together into one great harmonious whole, with due restrictions upon every several part; it is therefore more after the model of our civil government.

Again: Methodism grants an honorable dismissal to any member, who desires to withdraw and join a sister Church; but the Baptist Church will not allow a member to withdraw and join a sister Church, without the censure of excommunication. Baptist Discipline, p. 23. Our Republic will allow a citizen to expatriate himself,

without censure; but despotic governments will not allow this; therefore in this, our Church resembles our civil government, and yours the government of despots.

Again: Your own historian furnishes us with many striking instances of what he himself terms anti-Republican legislation in the Baptist Churches of Alabama; such instances as are unequalled elsewhere in the history of the orthodox Churches of our Republic. I quote from the "History of Alabama Baptists," by Rev. Hosea Holcombe, endorsed by the Alabama Baptist State Convention, 1835. He says—"Here we see the separating line drawn; here we see the large body of the denomination in Europe and America, excluded by the minority, and comparatively a small one." p. 98. This is contrary to the principle of Democracy, that majorities should rule. Of a Church called Bethel, he says: "A resolution was once passed in this Church, that each member should enjoy the liberty of doing as he pleased in missionary matters—give or let alone, as he deemed right." Gracious privilege, was it not?—to give a member the liberty of using his own money, in sending a Baptist ministry to those destitute of the Gospel! Verily, the members should have been thankful for so Democratic a grant! But their joy would have been short; for he says, "*This was found too Republican for the preacher, and by his influence it was rescinded.*" p. 108. Again: A friend, writing to him of the Claiborne Baptist Church, says, "*I need not tell you the foundation of all was laid by that cursed anti-missionary spirit which, while it cries out freedom, Republicanism, &c., would fetter the consciences of those who have been benevolent in their practice; and I have been led to the conclusion, that if the power was by them posses-*

sed, the conscience is not all they would bind; but the body would be doomed to endure all the horrors of a dungeon, if they were permitted to escape the lash." p. 114. *This is a clear case of anti-Republicanism.* You will please take notice, it is not I, but a Baptist, who prefers this charge. Once more: Speaking of the Conecuh River Association, p. 246, he says, "A division has taken place, *sixteen Churches declaring in favor of the anti-Republican, anti-Christian and anti-Gospel resolutions.*" I will not dwell longer at present upon the numerous cases of awful tyrannical and anarchical legislation in the Baptist Churches of Alabama, so deeply deplored by our good Brother Holcombe. Your own commendable devotion to the missionary cause, tells plainly, that if you "had been in the days of your fathers, you would not have been partakers with them;" nevertheless these sad results are justly chargeable upon your defective Church government, which gave scope for such sad legislation; I think with Jesse Mercer, that an union of ministers like our Conference, for instance, would largely have prevented such disorder.

From the records of your last State Convention in Montgomery, published in your own paper, May 31st, I fear the same evil still exists in your community. I find in the report of the Committee on Education, adopted by the Convention, and I suppose, approved by yourself—a report presented by your excellent brother-in-law, my old friend, Brother Talliaferro, of Talladega, the following language, "God forbid that we should ever lift up our voice against the independent or congregational form of government held to by the Baptist Church (~~we~~ would not oppose Christ and his Apostles),

but against their frequent abuse of it, we would lift up our voice like a trumpet, and tell our people of their transgressions. We would go further, and become exorcist; for if the Holy Messiah would not assist us against a demon so loathsome and filthy (sectional prejudice) we would, if Satan would for once depart from his usual policy, form an alliance with him, and it should be proclaimed to an astonished world, 'Satan had cast out Satan.' *This infernal spirit gets into every Baptist community, however small, magnifies their territory into the dignity and importance of an empire, makes their existence depend upon the ill success or downfall of every other interest promotive of their own.*" This is awfully severe; but it is the language of your late Convention, and I imagine I may justly call it yours also. Of the truth of it, you yourselves are the best judges. Modesty and charity forbid me speaking so harshly of the Baptist Church as you have done in the above extract; but I suppose chastisement from your own household is considered proper, and therefore allowable, when a similar castigation from a stranger would be warmly resented.

You have been free to charge us with taxation without representation, albeit to recommend the support of the ministry without threatening Church censure, cannot be properly called taxation. The nearest approach to taxation proper, and almost without representation, I have ever known in any Church in our free country, was in the action of your own Ministers' and Deacons' Meeting, Tuskegee, April 27th. There were present at that meeting, fifteen ministers, fifteen deacons, and twelve private members. It is fair to assume that these fifteen ministers represented thirty Churches, each min-

ister representing two Churches. On looking over the list of deacons and private members, I find that nearly half the deacons, and ten out of twelve of the private members, were from the Tuskegee Church; so that the remaining twenty-nine Churches were represented, apart from the ministers, by about seven or eight deacons and but two private members—a very slender representation, truly. At this meeting, which it would be a misnomer to call a representative assembly, the question is asked, "What should be done with a Church member, who, having the ability, refuses to give as God has prospered him, for the support of the gospel?" "Ans. He should be labored with and admonished, and if he persists in his covetousness, he should be excluded from fellowship." In another part of the same minutes, you define the passage, "as God has prospered him," thus: "each member furnishing the deacon a statement of the value of his property and income, so as to enable them to make a *pro rata* distribution among the members." It was by no means improper, in the big-souled Baptists of Tuskegee, for such are many of them, to have recommended liberality; but to demand that statement of the value of *both property and income* of the members, was rather too inquisitorial; and then to threaten exclusion against any who refused this inquisitorial taxation, was altogether too hasty a measure. Look at the practical workings of the rule. Imagine a deacon asking a planter the value of his lands, negroes and nett proceeds of his crop; requiring a merchant to give a statement of his assets, properly classed, as good or doubtful, and his liabilities, the probable loss on unsaleable goods, the amount of his sales, and the nett gain thereof, all ex-

penses being paid. Imagine the deacon inquiring of the money-lender, "What amount, Brother —, have you loaned out on interest?" And if he shaved notes, as unfortunately is sometimes the case, the nett profit of the transaction? All these particulars—for a statement of the value of *property and income* involves them all—given under the threat of exclusion from fellowship, and as the mis-called representative assembly ordered it. I think, sir, you will find your decree impracticable. If, however, your members submit to it, it is their business, not mine. I should, however, be glad to know it; for I should then frankly admit that your members bear off the palm from all Churches for docility and ~~submis-~~missiveness to the powers that be. Very sure am I, that every Methodist Church I have known, would be rather refractory under this yoke.

"O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see ourselves as others see us,
It wad frae many a blunder free us,
And foolish notion."—BURNS.

I think highly of the ability of your people for self-government, notwithstanding the numerous defects of your Church government. I know they would not wish to frame a civil government upon so disjointed a plan. If they did, I would assuredly think them sadly defective in law-making skill; or if the civil government framed after this pattern, were found sufficient for their wants, I would then regard them as angels, infallible in intellect, and immaculate in heart—incapable of misdemeanors, and who, therefore, would need no government at all. But to err is human.

With this demonstration of the fact, that the Methodist Church government is more after the model of our civil government than yours, if you think your government better, it will be like the preference of the Irishman, who said, "The moon was more useful than the sun, for the sun gave light in the day-time, when we did not need it, whereas the moon shone when it was dark." For your argument I have given you argument; for your railing, my only answer is—silence. I have spoken in the fear of God, and, I trust, kindly, as I would promote, and not retard the success of the gospel in all the tribes of God's Israel.

Your fellow-servant in Christ,

E. J. HAMILL.

June 21st, 1853.

REPLY TO LETTER IV.

INTERIOR VIEW OF METHODIST EPISCOPACY,
BY MASTER ARTISTS.

Advantages of religious controversy; Discrimination between men and principles; Absolute clerical power unscriptural and dangerous; A peep at the inner veil; Back ground sketch by Bishop Bascom, and a full portraiture by Bishop Hamline; Mr. Hamline rewarded with a bishopric; Analysis of the picture; Human credulity has some bounds, which clerical demands may not pass; A Presbyterian's opinion of the picture; Mr. Hamill's fourth letter; Congratulated on the improvement of his tone and spirit; The "fair" and "clear" disc of Methodism makes John Wesley "start and shudder;" "Twistification;" Natural mistake; Dexterous use of Mr. Noel's armory; Transparent perversion; Articles of faith and discipline imposed upon the laity without their consent; Hudibras; Another quotation from Hudibras; "Parallels;" Mr. Wesley in a dilemma; Singular perversion of a garbled extract from the Baptist confession of faith; Mr. Wesley competent to construe his own act; A digression in pursuit of Mr. Hamill; Four fundamental points in Baptist Church polity; Deacons' meetings, associations and conventions; A terrible crime against "our free country;" The "*decree of an advisory council*;" All forms of government susceptible of abuse; Reception and expulsion of members in the M. E. Church; Father Mercer; The "standards" on sacramental communion; The Baptist ground occupied by all denominations; Robert Hall's denunciation of the inconsistency of Pedobaptists in asking the Baptists to sacrifice a principle from which the practice of each results; Explanation asked.

"As certain also of your own poets have said."—Acts xvii: 28.

Religious controversy, conducted in an elevated tone of Christian principle and candor, ever has and ever will

be a most prolific source of blessing to the Church and to the world. For the time being, it may create an undue and even unpleasant excitement; but the permanent good it accomplishes, far outweighs its temporary evils. So long as truth is held to be dear to its votaries, so long will its maintenance devolve upon them the arduous and often unwelcome task of defending it against all the conflicting claims of error. Indeed, truth and error must, in their very nature, forever antagonize. "I have come," says Christ, "to set fire upon the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?" And again: "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." The truth is, God himself proclaimed war against sin and error in the very instant of their introduction to this world: "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." And this war has been going on ever since, and will continue until one party or the other shall be totally exterminated. It will be a sad day for truth when its friends, out of complaisance to popular opinion, or out of a sickly, sentimental catholicity, can quietly see its virgin form hewed in pieces, and perverted to purposes alien to its original intendment, and never lift their voices in its defence. And when error shall assume the sacred vestments and symbols of religion, and come to us habited "as an angel of light," beseeching us to accept of its protection and patronage, it were treason against the throne of Omnipotence to yield to its overtures. Then the Christian—he who loves God *better* than man—ought to grasp the sword of the Spirit, and pierce the "stolen livery" with as little compunction of conscience, as if it were furnished from the wardrobe of perdition.

Thus much, then, in regard to religious controversy in general. We have already stated, in reference to the subject under immediate discussion, that we are contending with no man or set of men, as such. We are fighting a principle, upon which we cannot detect the divine signature—a principle which transfers into Episcopal hands the rights and privileges of the Churches of Jesus Christ—which reverses the whole governmental economy of the kingdom of Christ, by *making the Churches the servants of the ministers, instead of the ministers the servants of the Churches*—and which, if unrestricted by other modifying agencies, will go on accumulating, until the history of Episcopacy in America will be but too faithful an echo of its history in the old world. We challenge any man to show a solitary instance in which such unlimited, supreme and irresponsible power has been claimed by the clergy in any period of ecclesiastical history, where it has not ended in corruption, intolerance and unrelenting persecution—where it has not ultimately become the right arm of political tyranny. We care not how pious, honest, numerous and formidable, the present friends and apologists of Episcopacy may be in this country. It is all the more dangerous for this. We proclaim it upon the house-top—we nail the thesis to the door of each and every of its adherents, be they numbered by thousands, millions or hundreds of millions—that the history of Episcopacy, up to the period of its establishment in this country, is written in carnage and blood. And when such a system of intolerance, bigotry and persecution rears its head in this happy land of freedom, religious and political—we care not how its lineaments may be softened by the pencil of artists—we

care not with what meekness and discretion its mitre may be worn by its present dignitaries—it is an assumption of power which God has never delegated even to angels. And we proclaim eternal hostility to such an unwarrantable assumption of power on the part of any set of men, however wise their heads or good their hearts. Said an intelligent and well read member of the Methodist Episcopal Church to us, not a year ago, in urging the importance of there being a variety of sects in the world, “The tendency of ecclesiastical power ever has been, and ever will be to corruption.”

We have been, up to this time, attempting to delineate the exterior of Methodist Episcopacy—occupying the attention of the reader with such views of it as would naturally strike the attention of the casual observer.

We now propose entering within the vail, taking with us two artists of established reputation, whose names will impart a value to their picture, which will not only give it a place in every METHODIST parlor, but also in the parlor of every well-wisher to Church and State. We mean Bishops BASCOM and HAMLINE. The first shall sketch the *back-ground*—the second shall paint the *portraiture*.

“*Art. 8th.* Where all the power and forms of government are held and managed by a few, who act without delegated right by consent of the people, the authority of the rulers is absolute, and the people are disfranchised of all right, in the various relations existing between them, as subjects, and those who hold the reins of government. Such a government must always lead to mental debility, will depress the moral vigor of a people, and necessarily abridge the liberty of reasoning

and investigation. In all governments of this kind, right is the creature of fortune, and the slave of caprice. Those who live under a government, which denies to the people the right of representation, blindly engage to submit to the will of others, right or wrong, and must continue to do so, or else deprive themselves of all the advantages of the community in which they live, in order to get rid of its evils. The enactment of all laws and rules, therefore, should be with and by the consent of the people, and their execution strictly under their control."

No contemptible limner, this Henry B. Bascom. But now for the portraiture. We quote from the "**Debates in the General Conference**, held in the city of New-York, 1844," pages 128-129.

"Mr. Hamline said— * * * * The class-leader, by mere eccentricity, becomes unpopular in his class. The pastor at discretion removes him from his office. The exhorter or unordained local preacher proves unacceptable, and a Quarterly Conference refuses to renew his license. The itinerant pastor is not useful in his charge, and the bishop or the presiding elder deposes him from his charge, or from the pastoral office, and makes him an assistant. The presiding elder impairs his usefulness on a district, not by gross *malfeasance*, but by a slight *misfeasance*; or oftener still because 'he is not popular,' and the bishop removes him to a station or a circuit, or perhaps makes him an assistant. I speak not now of annual appointments, when the term of the itinerant expires by limitation, but removals by the bishop or the presiding elder in the intervals of conference, which always imply a deposing from office, as well as a stationing act. In all these instances, the manner of removing from office is peculiar. First: It is *summary*, without accusation, trial or formal sentence. It is a ministerial, rather than a judicial act. Second: It is for no crime, and generally for no misdemeanor,

but for being 'unacceptable.' Third: Most of these removals from office are by a sole agent, namely, by a bishop or preacher, whose will is omnipotent in the premises. Fourth: The removing officer is not legally obliged to assign any cause for deposing. If he do so, it is through courtesy, and not as of right. Fifth: The deposed officer has no appeal. If indiscreetly or unnecessarily removed, he must submit; for there is no tribunal authorized to cure the error, or to rectify the wrong. But we believe that there are good and sufficient reasons for granting this high power of removal to those who exercise it. It promotes religion. It binds the Church in a strong and almost indissoluble unity. It quickens the communication of healing influences to the infected and the enfeebled parts of the body ecclesiastical. In a word, it is a system of surpassing energy, and 'is worthy of all eulogy.'"

Mr. Hamline was elevated to the rank of bishop, *after making the speech from which we have taken the foregoing extracts, and at the very same Conference.* So that we may regard his exposition of Methodist Episcopacy as having been endorsed by the General Conference of the United States.

Now, reader, it becomes us to speak in a serious tone. Here is an embodiment of ecclesiastical power, growing up under the boughs of the tree of liberty, assuming to do what? Look at it sternly in the face. You cannot plead that an intervening veil obscures the picture. Methodists! look at it! and we have mistaken your allegiance to the King of kings, and Lord of lords, as well as your love of liberty, civil and religious, if, after steadfastly gazing upon it long enough to comprehend its outlines, you do not feel an honest indignation rise in your bosoms at such despotic assumptions on the part

of your bishops and clergy. You cannot plead importance of the existence of this unbridled, unlimited supremacy of your Episcopacy, for we have dragged it to the light of day, and exposed it to your view. Again, we ask, what do these Rabbis in General Conference assembled assume? Listen, ye who are charmed with the "*Democratic element*" in this system of spiritual despotism:

The class-leader may be removed from his office *at the discretion* of the pastor—the pastor may be removed *at the discretion* of the bishop or presiding elder—the local preacher may be suspended *at the discretion* of the Quarterly Conference—the presiding elder may be removed *at the discretion* of the bishops. Now, let it be distinctly noted, that in every step of this disciplinary process, *the very existence of the Church is utterly ignored*. It is not even recognized as an advisory council. The constituencies who have to bear the burdens, and who are the parties immediately interested in these offices, are not so much as consulted in their removal. But then look at the *manner* in which such removal proceeds. "In all these instances," (specified above) "the manner of removing from office *is peculiar*. First: It is *summary*, WITHOUT ACCUSATION, TRIAL, OR FORMAL SENTENCE. Second: *It is for no crime*, and generally for no *misdeemeanor*, but for being '*unacceptable*.' Third: Most of the removals are by a sole agent, namely, by a bishop, or preacher, WHOSE WILL IS OMNIPOTENT IN THE PREMISES. Fourth: The removing officer is not legally obliged *to assign any cause for deposing*. If he does so it is through *courtesy*, and not as of *right*. Fifth: The deposed officer *has no appeal*. If indiscreetly or unnecessarily removed,

HE MUST SUBMIT, *for there is no tribunal authorized to cure the error or rectify the wrong.*" Let us condense it all into a single sentence. The manner of removing from office is *summary*, without trial or accusation—is for no crime, only for being unacceptable—mostly by a sole agent, a bishop or preacher, whose will is omnipotent in the premises, and who is not bound even to give any reason for his act—and the victim of his tyranny has no appeal; whether justly or unjustly treated, HE MUST SUBMIT! *for there is no tribunal to rectify the wrong!!* All this was solemnly set forth before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, as an exposition of *Methodism as it is*, and the author of it was immediately elevated to the rank of a bishop. And we are required to believe that this "peculiar" "system of surpassing energy" is "worthy of all eulogy." That it beautifully harmonizes with American Democracy! and that he who cannot see the "*Democratic element*" in this system, must possess a "judgment overpowered by a strange prejudice!" There are some drafts upon human credulity that cannot be well honored. Now, in regard to the dogma of transubstantiation, when a Catholic priest gravely assures us that the piece of bread he holds in his hand has been transmuted by some strange spiritual *hocus pocus*, into the veritable flesh of a body that was crucified eighteen hundred years ago, our eyes, touch, taste, and smell to the contrary notwithstanding, it strikes us that it would be perfectly respectful to decline the honor of *implicit faith*. Or in regard to baptismal regeneration; if an Episcopalian priest or bishop should dip his hand in water, and sprinkle a few drops in the face of an unconscious child, and

pronounce meanwhile the solemn baptismal formulary, and then gravely beseech us to believe that that child, although the instant before this ceremony was performed, was beyond the covenant of mercy, is now *regenerated and grafted into Christ*—without intending the slightest disrespect to his reverence, we would persist in saying *Non ego credulus illi*—we have not been able to see where the Divine being has assigned to a few drops of water an agency which is uniformly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. And when a Methodist Episcopal clergyman entreats us to believe that a governmental economy, in which a million and a half of subjects (we take the reputed membership of that Church) have no more voice in its legislative or administrative polity, than the subjects of the Czar, except the bare privilege of *submission*,—an economy in which the will of its self-constituted rulers “*is omnipotent in the premises*,” there being no “tribunal” “*to rectify the wrong*,” is nevertheless peculiarly Democratic and Republican—~~all~~ we have to say is, “*Pardon us if we know no such*” DEMOCRACY, “*if we comprehend no such*” REPUBLICANISM.

And that our Methodist brethren may see that we are not alone in this matter; that they may know what their Presbyterian brethren think of this “peculiar” “Democratic element” in their Church organization—we will close this part of our argument by introducing a short extract from an article in the “Calvinistic Magazine,” written, we believe, by its then editor, Rev. F. A. Ross, now pastor of the Presbyterian Church in the city of Huntsville, in this State. If they complain of what a *Baptist* editor has written, what will they say when they read the following from a *Presbyterian* editor.

Referring to the aforesaid exposition of Methodism by Mr. Hamline, he says: "Look at it ye members of the Methodist Church. Look at it. What! A system '*worthy of all eulogy!*' What say you, genius of America? She answers, '*The Methodist system is death to all the institutions for which Washington fought and freemen died!*' What says the Gospel? The Gospel tells us '*the Methodist system is ANTI-CHRIST—for it is the very identical priestly power which has crushed and trodden under foot the liberty wherewith Christ doth make free in every age of the world!*' "

* * * * *

Turn we now to Bro. Hamill's fourth letter. And first of all, we cannot but congratulate our brother on the evident improvement in the tone of the present as compared with his last communication. Its spirit is honorable alike to his head and his heart. "Richard is himself again." Its logic is, however, as yet an *open question*.

"Methodism," then, is "fair as the sun, clear as the moon, terrible as an army with banners!" How "fair" and how "clear" it is, we have been trying to discover. The father of it avers, in reference to that feature of it we are discussing, viz., its Episcopacy, that he had rather be called a *knave*, or a *fool*, a *rascal*, a *scoundrel*, than to be called a *bishop*! And if the renowned John Wesley could not steadfastly gaze upon its "fair" and "clear" disc, without "*starting and shuddering*," we suppose it must have been from the superabundance of the "*terrible*" which it reflected. Of this the reader will be able to form a better estimate as we proceed in our analysis of this "system of surpassing energy."

It seems that our brother cannot comprehend the difference between *men* and *principles*. If we express a personal regard to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and cannot at the same time enlarge our throat to the dimensions of "our Episcopacy," we have a wonderful knack of "twisting." On this principle, how supremely must Paul have despised Peter, when at "Antioch he withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Personal regard cannot be indulged without involving fellowship in all the principles of the object of it! and therefore the command, requiring us to "love our enemies" must seal our lips in silence as to their errors and sins! We cannot expose these without the charge of "*twistification*." (Brother Hamill has declared, and is determined to maintain his independence of Webster.)

We were arguing the congruity between Methodist Episcopacy and English Episcopacy, and not English *monarchy*, Brother Hamill. True, it is not surprising that you mistook *Episcopacy* for *monarchy*—they are *per nobile fratrum*—and the mistake you made is quite natural and significant.

Our brother plies the weapons furnished in Israel's armory with singular dexterity. He cannot draw too frequently on that rich collection of Episcopal facts. But we pride if "our Episcopacy" had a voice, it would ring a most plaintive appeal in his ear—"From such a defence may the good Lord deliver me!" Right glad are we, too, that something can provoke our good brother's laugh. We are happy to know that the frown which lowered ominously upon his brow so recently, is so soon succeeded by the peals of merriment.

constitutional officers, should not be *privates*, is provokingly ludicrous! is it?

Brother Hamill represents *us* as saying, that "an Established Church in England is more Democratic than the Methodist Church in the United States." The reader will remember that we said, if *he* the *Rev. E. J. Hamill*, (not *we*) could prove that we were mistaken in every point of the analogy we drew between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Established Episcopal Church of England, *he* would succeed in proving that an Established Church in a monarchical government was more Democratic than the Methodist Episcopal Church in the free Commonwealth of the United States. The perversion is so transparent that we really cannot complain of it.

As to "our evading the issue, and refusing to retract" the points specified, we are perfectly willing to "let the public judge between us." We should be inclined to indulge in Brother Hamill's exercise a little, when *he* speaks of "evading issues," but we never could laugh on paper.

It is complained that we have asserted, that the "bishops and clergy have imposed articles of faith upon their people without their consent." Now, if the converse of this is true, it can be proved. Who composed the General Conference at which the doctrines, discipline, rules and regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church were adopted? The bishops and travelling preachers. Were they delegated by their Churches to do this? Why, this is not pretended. The lay membership of that Church had no more connection with its governmental, doctrinal, and disciplinary organization than the aborigines of this continent. And from that time to

this, the bishops and clergy are the source and fountain of all power, *spiritual and temporal*, which the system involves. And it militates not in the slightest degree against this fact, that persons, in joining the Methodist Episcopal Church, impliedly submit themselves to its entire economy. This proves no more for Episcopacy than it does for Roman Catholicism. The question recurs in each instance:—Was the original authority which established that economy a usurped authority? If not, whence did it emanate?—from God or his Churches! If from God, then the apostles of Methodism were inspired, and the “Discipline” is of equal authority with the New Testament. If from the Churches, *show us the authority* and we are dumb.

There is a singular fatality attending Bro. Hamill’s quotations. He has treated us to a couplet from Hudibras, which so beautifully illustrates “our Episcopacy,” that we cannot resist the temptation to allude to it. There are those, doubtless,

“Who think religion is intended
For nothing else but to be mended.”

But who are they? Certainly not those who have no ecclesiastical legislatures—who suppose that Christ and his Apostles did all the legislation necessary for the churches in all ages—who believe that the constitution, doctrines and discipline, of these churches were drafted by the pen of inspiration, and therefore not likely to be “mended,” by general conferences, or any other ecclesiastical assemblage. Who are they, then, who suppose that religion may be “mended?” For seventy-one years the General Conference has been tinkering with the

"Discipline," and up to the last session of that body, they were still *mending* it. Some twenty-one changes were made in it, we learn, at that time. "Our Episcopacy," however, has been most sacredly guarded through all these changes.

As we expect to discuss the "Book Concern," with the "appurtenances thereto annexed," in our next article, we shall decline any response to this part of Brother Hamill's letter for the present.

Episcopacy may well afford to place her mitre upon the heads of such men as McKendree and Bascom, if for nothing else to purchase an indemnity from their merciless castigations. Now do not throw up your hands in holy horror, Brother Hamill, when we say that the mitre, when placed upon the head, will sometimes have the mysterious power of paralyzing the tongue. It sometimes has the effect that your favorite Hudibras ascribes to money:

"What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
About two hundred pounds a year.
And that which was prov'd true before,
Prov'd false again?—two hundred more."

Let us now look into Brother Hamill's "parallels."—In the first column we find John Wesley's name attached to two sentences, which we doubt not are genuine, though we could wish that he had given us chapter and verse. The first is this—"I firmly believe I am a *scriptural* Episcopos (bishop), as much as any man in England.—JOHN WESLEY." And so every settled pastor of a Church on earth might have said the same, with equal propriety. Suppose our mutual friend and

esteemed brother, Rev. T. Roor, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in this place, should say that he was as scriptural a bishop as any man on the American continent, would it be legitimate to publish it to the world that he, Mr. R., "preferred the Episcopal mode of Church government to any other?"—in the face, too, of a solemn declaration addressed to a Methodist bishop, that he would rather be called "a knave, a rascal, or scoundrel than to be called a bishop?" Again: If in the second sentence, Mr. Wesley uses the term bishop in the sense in which *it was assumed* by Messrs. Asbury and Coke, Bro. Hamill has only succeeded in convicting his venerable spiritual progenitor *of talking two ways*, thus:

"Their father in the Lord may be called the bishop, overseer of them all. "Men may call *me* a *knave*, a *fool*, a *rascal*, or a *scoundrel*, and I am content; but they shall never

JOHN WESLEY." by my consent call me a *bishop*.

JOHN WESLEY."

And our reply to it shall be in the language of Pascal: "How happy is it to have to do with people that talk pro. and con! By this means you furnish me with all I wanted; which was, *to make you confute yourselves*."

A New Testament "bishop *must* be blameless," a Methodist bishop *ought* to be blameless.

His second column contains two sentences taken alternately from the Methodist Discipline, and a Baptist Confession of Faith, and so arranged as to convey the impression that the extract from the Baptist Confession *endorses* the one from the Methodist. We do not wish to charge Bro. Hamill with *garbling* the extract from the

Baptist Confession, for this would seem unkind; but let the reader glance at this extract of our brother, and read the following, which is the veritable paragraph he has mutilated: "9. The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person fitted and gifted by the Holy Spirit, unto the office of bishop, or elder in a Church, is, *that he be chosen thereunto by the common suffrages of the Church itself*; and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands by the eldership of the Church," &c. The election and consecration of a Methodist bishop at a General Conference *by the clergy*, and the election and ordination of a New Testament Bishop by the Church and its eldership, are as far asunder as the east is from the west.* And yet the latter is so mutilated and tacked on to the other as if there were a particle of affinity between them! Surely, surely, it cannot be the defence of truth which requires a resort to such expedients as this.

We suppose Mr. Wesley knew what construction to place upon his own act, and what he was writing, when he addressed the letter to bishop Asbury, *four years after* he and Dr. Coke assumed that title. It is a little singular, that when he makes a thrust at "our Episcopacy," it is all "occasioned by the misrepresentations of others;" while in every other respect he is believed and obeyed almost as implicitly as if he were inspired. It seems as if there is but one thing on earth that the Methodist clergy love better than they do John Wesley—and that is "*our Episcopacy*." John must not touch that, if he does, why "the dear old man" has been miserably duped.

For the sake of unity in this discussion, we have tried

* See Appendix D.

to avoid all side issues up to this time. For this purpose, we have permitted much that Brother Hamill has said vitally affecting our own denomination, to pass without comment. But a sense of duty constrains us to depart from this course at this stage of the discussion—not that we intend to be drawn from the main question—but by way of a short episode, to vindicate our own Church polity from some of the wildest and most puerile attacks it has ever been our fortune to observe. Our brother has set us the example of comparing the relative claims of Methodist and Baptist Church government to the favorable consideration of American freemen. We are willing, therefore, that he shall have all the credit and honor of any victory he may obtain over us in this respect, and deposit his laurels upon the altar of “our Episcopacy.”

I. The first question that suggests itself in this connection is, Who are the legitimate constituency of a gospel Church? With the New Testament in our hands, there can be no difficulty in answering this question. Those who repent of their sins, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and publicly profess that faith by submitting to the ordinance of baptism. In other words, those who have been “born of the Spirit—born of God—called to be saints—justified—sanctified.” We prove this, first, from the commission—“He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved;”—and secondly, from the manner in which the Apostles themselves understood it—“They that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” “And the Lord added unto them daily such as should be saved.” “And many of

the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized," &c., &c. The truth is, there is not a recorded instance in the New Testament of any person being received into the Church without furnishing reasonable evidence that he had exercised "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." And that such and such only were the constituency of all the Churches planted by the Apostles, is evinced from the additional fact, that all the Apostolic epistles are addressed to them as such—"To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints—beloved of God—the faithful in Christ Jesus—the saints in Christ Jesus—faithful brethren in Christ—brethren beloved—whose faith grew exceedingly," &c., &c. No man can doubt that if the Apostles uniformly applied such terms as these to the Churches, to whom they directed their epistles, they must have been composed professedly at least, of "new creatures in Christ Jesus"—converted to God by the Holy Spirit.

II. The second question to be considered is, Whether these persons—these saints—faithful brethren in Christ Jesus, &c., are *competent to govern themselves*. If they are not, who on earth are competent to the task? The very object of the gospel economy is to teach man this lesson, and to enable him to exemplify it in his relations to the Church. Solomon says, "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." Is a king considered competent to govern? The Christian is called a king. Is a priest? He is called also a priest. The Christian has been aptly called "the highest style of man." Is there any other character on earth superior to him in this respect, to whom he can apply for guar-

dianship? As a nation, we have announced the doctrine to the astonished world, *that man is capable of self government*; and shall we, in our ecclesiastical organizations, nullify that doctrine among ourselves? Shall we proclaim on our civil constitution one thing, and on our ecclesiastical constitutions the reverse? We repeat, if Christians are not competent to govern themselves, who beneath the canopy of heaven are?

III. The third question suggested is, Whether the New Testament has inculcated any form of Church government? If it has, we are capable of discovering it; if it has not, then the man of God *cannot be thoroughly furnished to every work*. Now, we affirm that the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ is the constitution of a gospel Church; that the governmental, doctrinal, and disciplinary economy of the kingdom of Christ is set forth in that holy volume so luminously, "that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein;" that "the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion" of Christians; and that to affirm differently, is either to charge folly upon the Triune God, or unfaithfulness upon the sacred writers; to submit ourselves to the blind guidance of blind, self constituted and presumptuous priests, who assume the prerogatives of God himself; and to land finally within the crushing embraces of that spiritual Moloch, the Roman Catholic hierarchy. And we believe that this holy volume teaches the doctrine *that Christians are capable of governing themselves*.

IV. The fourth and last question that we shall now suggest, arising out of this subject, is the GREAT QUES-

tion, over which the conflict of every age since Episcopal government has set up its impious claim against Church government, has been waged—and it is the question we are now discussing: Do the Churches belong to the ministry? or conversely—Do the ministry belong to the Churches? We give the question this double form, so as to present to the reader the whole subject matter in controversy in a nut-shell. Episcopacy maintains an absolute proprietorship in the Churches; assumes to establish its doctrines and discipline; appoint its pastors; change their locations *at discretion*; to receive and *suspend* preachers as necessity may require; to oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the Church. In a word, it assumes all the attributes, rights, privileges, and immunities of a supreme irresponsible government. Now, in opposition to all these extra-judicial and impious claims to ecclesiastical powers and prerogatives, we maintain that THE CHURCH of our Lord Jesus Christ—called in the scriptures his “body”—“the Bride, the Lamb’s wife”—“royal priesthood, holy nation, peculiar people,” &c., has been invested with all the prerogatives and powers which her ascended Head has ever conferred upon any agency under heaven. The great *Magna Charta* of our spiritual commonwealth confers upon her, under Christ, the sole exercise of ecclesiastical power. This is our entrenchment. It has been planned by infinite wisdom, built by infinite power, and guarded by infinite goodness. It is a bulwark of strength which has withstood the lapse of ages and the waste of empires, the menaces of kings, the assaults of Episcopacy, and thunders of the Vatican. And it will continue to tower

in majesty and glory until Daniel's sublime prophecy shall be fulfilled: "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heavens, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Into the hands of such a constituency, it is safe to deposit this power; for then the highest guaranties that heaven can give, and that earth can receive are furnished, that it will be *wielded only for good*. The truth is, according to the New Testament, the Church can only exist to do good. The very moment she perverts the power committed to her hands, to base and unworthy purposes, she ceases to be a Church of Christ, and becomes a sect and synagogue of Satan. These are some of the essential organic elements of Baptist Church polity. *Are they anti-Republican?*

We have barely touched upon these topics; but our space will not allow us to expand them. This we shall do as soon as the present discussion is disposed of. A single remark will dispose of everything Bro. Hamill says in regard to ministers' and deacons' meetings, associations, conventions, &c. In his second communication, he objected to such assemblages as these among the Baptists, because they were merely *advisory councils*; in his present one, he objects to one of these meetings, recently held in Tuskegee, because its action on a certain query, "was the nearest approach to taxation proper and almost without representation, he has ever known in any Church in our free country." At one time they are merely *advisory councils*; at another, they

pass a "decree," to which, if the Churches submit, they "bear off the palm from all, of docility and submission to the powers that be!" Rather hard pressed for "*argument to answer argument.*" Who is "twisting?" And what do you think, reader, was this terrible crime against "our free country?" First: A query was suggested by a certain brother, a private member, to this effect: What is the best method of raising the funds to defray the *necessary* expenses of the Church? The answer was, that each man ought to pay in proportion to his worth, according to the Divine rule: "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, *as God has prospered him*, that there be no gatherings when I come."—1 Cor. xvi: 2. Second: That covetousness was idolatry, and that, in the judgment of that meeting, no idolator ought to be retained in the Church. What a monstrous offence this! How shocking to the delicate sensibilities of our brother? What profound concern does he manifest for the honor of his country? All this, too, the mere expression of an opinion by a voluntary meeting! A privilege guaranteed to and exercised by every public meeting of the citizens of this free country, upon all subjects of common interest.

We suppose that we must inform Brother Hamill that all forms of government may be abused, not excepting Democracies. It is a significant fact, *that the very arguments he is using against the Baptist polity, are the identical arguments which monarchists have always used against popular government.* He has picked up a few cases in our histories, in which, under the strong excitement of some vexed question, a few of our Churches have abused their

power, and turns these against us, when he himself will admit that they are the *exceptions* and not the *rule*; just as the apologists for royalty catch up those occasional outbreaks, particularly in our large cities, and construe them into arguments against Republicanism. We challenge Brother Hamill to show any strifes in the Baptist Churches, more dishonorable to the Christian name, or more destructive of human rights, than those which agitated the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1798-1824; '28, and '44—and then, growing out of the last, the humiliating spectacle of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *versus* the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, before the United States Court in New-York, in reference to the “mammon of unrighteousness,” in the famous Book Concern lawsuit. A pretty fair evidence, this, that Episcopacy cannot meet every emergency it may precipitate upon itself.

Brother Hamill maintains that *without the vote of the laity*, none can be received into the itinerancy, or into the Church. In the Discipline, are the following questions and answers:

Quest. 1. How is the preacher to be received?

Ans. 1. *By the Annual Conference.* 2. In the interval of a Conference, by a bishop, or the presiding elder of the district, until the sitting of the Conference. p. 37.

Again:

Quest. 1. What are the duties of the elder, deacon, or preacher, who has the especial charge of a circuit?

Ans. 4. To *appoint* all the leaders, and *change* them *when he sees it necessary.* 5. TO RECEIVE, TRY, AND EXPEL members, according to the form of the Discipline.

Now, Brother Hamill tells us one thing, the Discipline tells us the very reverse. And moreover we have been present, time and again, at the reception of members into the Methodist Episcopal Church; and never have we heard the concurrence of the Church asked in a single instance. Perhaps this part of the Discipline has been "mended."

Father Mercer's wish in regard to a general meeting of the ministers of Georgia, was certainly right and proper. But that the expression of such a wish should ever have been metamorphosed in a desire for a "Conference Episcopacy," we are sure never could have entered the head of any other person except a Methodist clergyman. A voluntary Conference of ministers, for mutual edification and spiritual improvement, is quite a different thing from an ecclesiastical body assembled to enact, expound, and enforce laws upon the Churches.

We had intended to compare the constitution of Methodist Episcopacy with the constitution of the United States, after the example of our brother; but our columns are filled, and we are obliged to defer it, for the present. Justice to our correspondents requires that we shall give at least every other issue to their communications. We think we shall be able to make this part of the subject *interesting* in some respects.

As our brother is still haunted by that hydra-headed monster among the Baptists, "*close communion*," and as he still seems to consider that it has much to do in reflecting light upon the "Democratic element," in "our Episcopacy," we suppose we must devote a single paragraph to the elucidation of that subject. Our position is, that the Baptists act, not only upon divine authority,

but also upon a principle adopted by every denomination of Christians on earth, so far as we know. That principle is, *that Baptism is an indispensable pre-requisite to sacramental communion.* In the Methodist Discipline, pages 86-87, the following question and answer occurs:

Quest. How shall we prevent improper persons from insinuating themselves into the Church?

Ans. 1. Let none be received into the Church until they are recommended by a leader with whom they have met at least six months on trial, AND HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED.

Probationers may be allowed to commune, "provided they have been baptized," says Remington, who was twenty years an elder in that Church, "and not without." And with this agrees "Hibbard on Baptism," a work endorsed by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and recognized as a text-book for young ministers, for the third year in their course of study. On page 174, he says: "It is but just to remark that in one principle the Baptist and Pseudo-baptist Churches agree. They both agree in rejecting from communion at the table of the Lord, and in denying the rights of Church fellowship to all who have not been baptized. Valid baptism they consider as essential to constitute visible Church membership. THIS ALSO WE HOLD. The only question, then, that here divides us is, what is essential to valid baptism?" The conclusion, then, is inevitable, if we are to believe their own standard authors, that the Methodist Episcopal Church hold that baptism is a pre-requisite to the Lord's supper, and the door of admission into the Church. If Bro. Hamill will turn to the 213th page of Hall's Works, a volume from which he has often quoted, and with which he seems

peculiarly charmed, he will receive the following rebuke from the "eloquent open-communication Baptist:" "Let it be admitted that baptism is, under all circumstances, a necessary condition of Church fellowship, and it is impossible for the Baptists to act otherwise. The recollection of this may suffice to rebut the ridicule and silence the clamor of those who loudly condemn the Baptists for a proceeding which, were they but to change their opinion on the subject of baptism, their own principles would compel them to adopt. They both concur in a common principle, from which the practice deemed so offensive is the necessary result. Considered as an *argumentum ad hominem*, or an appeal to the avowed principle of our opponents, this reasoning may be sufficient to shield us from that severity of reproach to which we are often exposed, nor ought we to be censured for acting upon a system [principle?] which is sanctioned by our accusers." With what sincerity can he, or indeed the Pedobaptists generally, use the arguments of Robert Hall on the communion question; when they all, as denominations, without exception, equally with Baptists, repudiate his premises? No, Brother Hamill, you have certainly too much perception not to see that the legitimate question at issue between Baptists and Pedobaptists, relates to baptism, and not to sacramental communion. It is close baptism, not close communion.

Our brother takes leave of us this time rather abruptly. A slight frown gathered upon his brow! Don't be crusty, Brother Hamill. If you have succeeded in "answering argument with argument," you ought to have quit in a better humor. We are not conscious of having used reproachful or insulting language to him.

And as we are an alien, and have never been accustomed to "a will omnipotent in the premises," we answer his clerical command of "silence!"—"Pardon us if we know no such right, if we comprehend no such privilege!"

Will Brother Hamill please inform us distinctly, whether the charge of falsehood in his last communication was intended to refer to the *facts we* "had alleged against Methodism," up to the time of the writing of his article, and which we specified in our answer; or whether he intended it to refer to the positions in the article from the "Watchman?" We are actuated by the kindest of feelings, and the best of motives in making this request.

June 21st, 1855.

LETTER V.

METHODISM.

THE STRIKING ANALOGY BETWEEN THE METHODIST CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Methodism never connected with the State; Bro. Henderson's just denunciation of persecution; Points of agreement; Doctrine of the fathers of Trent rejected; Fuller's view of the extent of pastoral care; A bold admission; True credentials; A few drops or a whole pond of water insufficient to regenerate; Bro. Henderson's analysis of the elements of a Church amended; The great Head of the Church legislates for her, and calls her officers; Exercise of reason not superseded; Conventions and creeds necessary; The absence of connectionalism the cause of disorder in the Baptist Church; Exceedingly powerful advice; Agreement with Rob't Hall; A new style of logic; The faith of Methodism not mended; Methodism has a single grand platform of doctrines; The Baptist Church may have ten thousand varying creeds, and, therefore, cannot with accuracy be styled the Baptist Church; The Hiwassee Baptist Association; Baptist Churches have no legislative representatives at all; Their practice better than their theory; Mr. Wesley did prefer the Episcopal mode of Church government; Unique reasoning; Mercer favors a platform similar to that of Methodism; An interior view of the trial of members; The challenge to publish a deed refused; Power of Bishops in civil matters; The generosity of the General Conference in making bishops of its enemies; Chief business of an Annual or General Conference; Why should the laity act in two Church courts upon the same

cases; Distinction between the act of distributing ministers and other Church business; Baptist itinerancy again; A Georgia Baptist Conference of ministers; Father Mercer; Church removals like removals by the President; Bishop Hamline's view excessively Republican; A chance for a pretty burst of indignation.

ANALOGY.

Analogy between the Methodist Church government and the United States government, shown in many particulars; Consistency would require the opposers of Methodism to seek the destruction of our civil Republic; Other Baptist disorders; Melancholy spectacle; Popery in the Berlin Baptist Church; as their poets say; Opposition preaching; Explanation; glaring errors; Baptist piety will do good in spite of its defective government; Concession.

"Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof; mark ye well her bulwarks; consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."
PSALMS.

"I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say."

BROTHER HENDERSON:

As Methodism has never for a moment been connected with the State, in any land; not even for a period as brief as the mad sway of that "most eminent Baptist, Thomas Munier," or as the wild and licentious tyranny of John Matthias, and John Bocold, of Leyden: and as she has therefore, never in a single instance, lent herself to any form of civil government, as an instrument of oppression, I may freely leave to your ready pen, the task of portraying the evils of the union of Church and State; and of denouncing with just severity the cruel persecutions, raised from time to time, by Church authorities, under the sanction of the State. My only aim will be, to demonstrate the claims of Methodism to Republicanism of the highest excellence.

I can cordially endorse all you have to say upon the value of controversy, when conducted fairly, amicably, and in a Christian spirit. I agree with you still further in the strongest condemnation of any Episcopacy, which claims to be a third order in the ministry of divine right, in which alone is vested the right of ordination, and of government in the Church, and without which third order, as some sects contend, there were no Church at all, even though the incumbents of this third order falsely called apostolic, were heretical in doctrine, and impious in life; as the Tridentine fathers affirmed, that "a bishop might become a priest of Jupiter, or a priest of Baal, and still be a priest of Jesus Christ." (Camp. Eccles. Lects.) Such assumptions I regard as anti-Christian, and as the very corner-stone of the Papal hierarchy.

Methodists do not claim ordination from a higher source than a presbyter, called also in the Scriptures, a bishop; which latter appellation with us is, by custom only and not by divine appointment, restricted to the designation of him who we elect to be the *primus inter pares*—first among equals; like the angel of the Church of Ephesus, who was first among the associate bishops of Ephesus. In this sort of presidency or moderatorship, involving in a modified sense, what Paul had—"the care of all the Churches"—there can be nothing in conflict with the qualifications of a bishop, as described in the Bible. Your great Fuller says, "Nor would the influence of the first missionaries be confined to a single congregation, but by a kind of parental authority, would extend to all the societies that might be raised by means of their labors." (Bap. Lab. vol. iii. p. 330.)

I will make the still bolder admission, that I do not care to claim a place even in a succession of Presbyterial ordination, running back to apostolic times: for all successions at the hands of men, have come to us through corrupt channels. Give me direct succession from heaven, by the Spirit's call, entitling me to ministerial credentials; and then, as a matter of order and expediency merely, let it be acknowledged by the laity, and endorsed by a prayerful imposition of hands of holy brethren.

I do concur with you heartily also, in rejecting the absurd doctrine, that a few drops of water, or even a whole pond of water, can, by the sprinkling or the immersion, either of an infant or an adult, "perform the work uniformly ascribed to the agency of the Holy Spirit." Thus far, I suppose, we are of one mind.

Your analysis of the elements of a Church, is partially correct, but may need some emendation. Let us see.—What is a Church? Ans: "A company of men having the form, and seeking the power of godliness, united to help each other to work out their own salvation." Secondly: Are they competent to govern themselves? Ans.: They are, within certain limitations: First, that Christ alone can frame their fundamental laws; and next, that the Spirit of God shall choose their ministers or overseers; but these things being done for them by the great Head of the Church (for in these things Church government is essentially different from civil government), they may then judge who are called by Christ to the holy office—to bear some sort of rule in the Church of God, as Paul saith, "Remember them which have the rule over you," who have spoken unto you the

word of God—and may do also whatever else is necessary to good government. Thirdly: Has the New Testament inculcated any form of Church government?

Ans: "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation," yet they do not supersede the necessity for the legitimate exercise of reason; nor do they go into detail to such an extent, as to make void the functions of associations, conferences, synods, and conventions; and in view of the brevity of the Scriptures, the variety of mental character, the fallibility even of good men, and the propriety of securing harmony of action, the common sense of all ages has dictated the necessity of drawing up symbols of faith, called creeds, articles, or confessions of faith, to serve as points of union among Christians, and as defences against the encroachments of error. Fourthly: Do the Churches belong to the ministry, or the ministry to the Churches? Ans: Neither; but both, if faithful, to the Lord, who placed those called by His Spirit, to the ministry, "over us in the Lord."—Eph. i, 13.

A government of this description is certainly in no wise anti-Republican; nevertheless, in that form in which these elements exist in the Baptist Church, there is wanting that beautiful connectionalism, with its checks and balances, which makes Methodism so close an imitation of our civil Republic. It is this want of government, properly so called, which renders the Baptist Church so unlike our federal government, and which produced the terrible disorders in your Georgia and Alabama Churches, referred to in my last communication. Your lame apology for those disorders; for the wretched anarchical legislation lamented by your own historian;

for the existance of that "infernal spirit which gets into every Baptist community however small," if your last Convention is correct; and for the *exceedingly powerful advice* given in your Tuskegee legislation on taxation; which advice threatens exclusion against any of your members who dare refuse such inquisitorial tax, I think it unnecessary to disturb. I shall not tear away that fig-leaf concealment of your nakedness.

I am happy to inform you furthermore, that I agree with the great Robert Hall upon the question of close communion; I concur with him most heartily, in both his premises and conclusion. Whenever I can accredit any man as a true minister of Christ, in the highest functions of the ministry, namely, preaching the gospel of Christ, I will freely invite him to partake of the Lord's Supper with me, even were he baptized by a Papist, or never baptized at all. I know of no Methodist minister who would be guilty of the absurd inconsistency of repelling, on the ground of baptism, whether valid or not, from the Lord's table, one whom he himself acknowledged as a minister of Jesus Christ.

You still cling fondly to the allegation, that in our free land, where every one may worship God under his own vine and fig tree, "we impose articles of faith upon our people without their consent; if it is not so, the converse can be proved," namely, "the people frame them." Is it true, that if the people do not frame articles of faith, these articles are imposed on them without their consent, when they voluntarily subscribe to them?! This is sheer nonsense. Did preachers manufacture them? By no means; for we acknowledge none but Christ, as the legislator of the Christian Church; and both

preachers and people believe that God himself revealed these doctrines in his word. This proving of the converse, is a style of logic peculiarly your own. Hedge, Blair, Whateley, and other logicians, had not discovered that if a particular proposition be not true, the converse must be true. It is unquestionably Hendersonian, and worthy of a copyright. Look at its application to current topics. "It is a very hot day, sir." "No, sir, it is only moderately warm for the season." "Well, sir, if it is not a very hot day, the converse must be true—it is a very cold day." Most lucid logic! Our fathers taught that the Holy Scriptures contained all things necessary to salvation (Dis.); when they preached the word, our people, like the Bereans, searched the Scriptures to see whether these things were so; and the word of the Lord was glorified in the voluntary addition to our Church of the multitudes who would enjoy this salvation; and both bishops and people have failed to discover, during the existence of American Methodism, any necessity for mending our articles of faith.

It is true, the Methodist Church, like the Presbyterian and other Churches, has but a single grand platform of doctrines for our entire membership; one God, one faith, one baptism into Christ's death, (not into his burial, for his burial was a mere circumstance, in no wise essential to the atonement.) We do not, therefore, upon the organization of every Church, or every Conference, call upon our members to form a new set of articles of faith; if we did, the articles thus framed might be eighteen centuries too late; and then our twelve thousand Methodist Churches might have as many varying creeds, agreeing in some points, and differing in others, as

there are Churches. In that event it would be as great a fallacy to style these thousands of our Churches, with their varying creeds, the Methodist Church, as it is to give the appellative which denotes unity, namely, the Baptist Church, to the ten thousand Churches, having frequently dissimilar creeds, which agree with you upon questions of baptism. Hence, in strictness of speech, there can be no such thing as the Baptist Church; unless it be some particular society claiming that title; for common sense teaches, that when thousands of Churches severally try their skill at creed-making, and manufacturing so many distinct confessions of faith, they cannot be one Church, unless difference and unity mean the same thing. This is the rather true, when we consider that every one of these Churches claims independent jurisdiction in every respect, as the minutes of the last Hiwassee Baptist Association, N. C., in the following language testify: "We have no high-sounding titles, as pope, cardinals, ruling or presiding elders, synods, assemblies, or conferences, to hear and decide upon appeals, and to pass laws for the government of the Church. We meet together for mutual comfort and edification, not to decide upon appeals, nor to make laws."—Carolina Baptist, June 6th.

Now, I humbly submit it to your good judgment, whether the members of numerous Churches thus governed, with their several distinctive peculiarities, and without any law-making department, properly so called, for the aggregate Churches, and hence, of course, without any representatives at all, whether lay or clerical, invested with legislative power, can with any accuracy be styled the Baptist Church? I think not. I submit

ter of our entire system. Your reverse logic is of a piece with your converse logic. Unique specimens of reasoning.

Let your own Mercer instruct you into the propriety of our course. "The ministry is to ministers, what the Church is to common brethren; and a man might as soon be introduced into the fellowship of the Church without being received by the members of the Church, as any one can be brought into the fellowship of the ministry without being received by the ministry." *Memoirs*, p. 453. Again: he fixes the minimum number who may constitute a church, at seven; and then, the ministerial office being elective, he says, "In that case, not seven, but four against three, and these three may be the strength of the Church, appoint one of themselves to the office of gospel minister. Is it possible that such an appointment can give to any one an authoritative claim on all churches and ministers, to their cordial acceptance and brotherly companionship? Besides the door it would throw open to vile speculation, and base electioneering. Once establish the rule that the Church has the only and sole authority to induct into the ministerial office, and that it is elective, and you have opened the flood-gates to error, and exposed the Church to feuds and destruction." (p. 454.) Well spoken, Brother Mercer, though you have come upon the platform of Methodism to utter it.

Our ministers do summon offenders to trial; still an interior view of our Discipline would show you that we try them by members only. As for what you may or may not have heard of the concurrence of members, asked on receiving members, I cannot answer; but I

presume you will not think I got up a case of the reception of fourteen members into full connection by vote of the Church, for your special benefit, and in anticipation of your denial of that custom only a few days after. You will understand Methodism better before I have done with you.

Your refusal to meet my challenge for the publication of the deed of any Methodist church in the land, I take as a silent abandonment of your position on the property question; and I await patiently for your denouement of the mystery of the Book Concern.

With regard to the power of our bishops to control the suffrages of our people in civil affairs, I think you are well enough acquainted with Methodists to be assured, that if our bishops could be found silly enough to attempt such control, they would not only meet with moral resistance, but in many instances would be forcibly convinced of their error by very striking arguments.

Our venerable bishops, McKendree and Bascom, who had spoken so freely upon questions of Church government, you insinuate, were bribed into silence by election to the Episcopal office. The members of Conference who elected them must have been of a happy temperament indeed, to have rewarded those who "mercilessly castigated" them with the highest honors in their gift. "Would your Convention do likewise?" Seriously, the insinuation is utterly unworthy of you. You cannot possibly credit it yourself. If you duly consider the Scripture, "With what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again," you will be more chary in future, of your flings at the memory of the holy dead.

Upon a careful consideration of the reasons you have offered to prove Methodism anti-Republican, I find your proofs evince an entire misapprehension of Methodism. You have created a man of straw, and battled valiantly with your own misconceptions of our system. My principal business, therefore, in this discussion, has been to rectify your mistakes concerning us. *I have already informed you that almost all the business of your irregularly constituted Conventions, is transacted in our system, by side-societies; such as Education, Tract, Missionary Societies, and Boards of Finance; in all of which we have as much lay delegation, and lay management, as you could ask for; and that in everything, in which the laity is equally concerned with the ministry, it is the genius of Methodism to delight in lay co-operation. But in the Annual and General Conferences, whose chief business is the examination and reception of ministers, and their distribution on the itinerant plan—a plan which you yourself have highly commended—and the framing of laws regulating that reception and distribution, we admit no lay delegation, save in the financial and other enterprises specified. Why should we have lay delegates to examine and receive ministers in Conference, when lay members have already acted on the very same cases in their respective Church courts, and the only candidates who can apply for admission into the itinerancy, have come up upon the recommendation of the laity?*

And with reference to the appointment of these ministers to their several fields of labor, I have already shown you, that if you had a hundred Baptist itinerant ministers assembled in Convention, to be scattered to the four winds upon a self-sacrificing mission, *you could*

neither think it just, nor expedient, nor Republican, that a Baptist layman should arise upon the floor of the Convention, and command every one of these hundred Baptist itinerants to strike their tents and go whithersoever he ordered them, while he himself submitted to no such sacrifices, and quietly returned to his secular pursuits at home. Such Republicanism would be a bitter pill to these supposed Baptist itinerants; they would soon come to the conclusion, that they knew no such rights, and comprehended no such privileges. You have been very careful not to notice this distinction, which I have drawn between the act of distributing ministers upon the itinerant plan, and the support of other grand Church schemes; the first illustrated in the case of the supposed Baptist itinerants, and the second in Missionary, Financial and other Boards, which attend to business like that of your Conventions, and in which, there is as much lay management with us, if not more, than you can possibly boast of in your system. You have gone even farther than we have in calling ministers' meetings without any lay delegation whatever; for you have done this, without the reason which exists among us for doing it, namely, the appointment of ministers to their field of labor, in which none should have a voice but those who submit to like sacrifices. You have called ministers' meetings, as Father Mercer informs us, without any business of this sort to be brought before them, and only, according to Mercer, "to prevent distracting controversies, and to keep the beauty of the Church from being marred."

Your remark that this was only a wish of Father Mercer, show that you are not well posted up in the history of Georgia Baptists. It was not merely a wish; on

the society, such a ministers' meeting was actually organized at Birmingham in October 1818 but it was found inefficient to secure a general attendance, and in 1820 it was forever extinguished into non-existence. **Memorial, p. 188.** Father Warner lamented his disconnection, and affirmed it was because "they were turned every way to his own way, and that young ministers have had no training of themselves in the churches, and have been so long accustomed to direct their own course, that it will be hard to bring them to submit to the discipline of a ministerial union." I found also upon a careful reading of the History of the Alabama Baptist, page 184 that men gave place a system of itinerancy upon a small scale, young ministers associate themselves for the work and make among themselves their own arrangements, for the supply of the given field with itinerant labor. "Hence, therefore, a Conference of ministers transacting business in which none but themselves are equally interested, and that, too, with a lay board of finance added to it, be anti-Republican. How much more anti-Republican must a Conference of Baptist ministers be, who are without lay delegation, and who have no itinerant business to justify their exclusiveness. "Take the beam out of thine own eye," &c.

You have rejoiced over your quotation from Bishop Hamline, as one that findeth great spoil. What a pity to spoil your pretty piece of fun! **Mr. Hamline** said, "The class leader becomes *unpopular* and the preacher removes him; the itinerant preacher *is not useful in his charge*, and the bishop or presiding elder deposes him from his charge or pastoral office, and makes him an assistant. The presiding elder impairs his usefulness

on a district, not by gross *malfeasance*, but by a slight *misfeasance*, or oftener still *because he is not popular*, and the bishop removes him to a circuit."

In all these instances, the removal is summary, without trial; it is for no crime, and generally for no misdemeanor, *but for being unacceptable*. These removals are by a sole agent whose will is omnipotent in the premises, &c. Do you think, Brother Henderson, that in these removals, "the very existence of the Church is utterly ignored?"

Why, sir, Bishop Hamline tells us, they are made because of *eccentricity, unacceptability or unpopularity with the Church*; and hence, in every instance specified by him, according to the wish of the Church, which is certainly sufficiently Republican. But further, do you know the design of Mr. Hamline's speech? the grand object for which it was made? If not, I will tell you then: it was to prove that the General Conference could remove every one of our bishops from office if it saw proper, without any crime, or misdemeanor whatever, and even without accusation or trial, and summarily—that the authority of the Conference over the bishops was omnipotent.

In the very next paragraph to that quoted by you, Mr. Hamline says: "I shall argue our authority to depose a bishop summarily, for improprieties morally innocent, which embarrass the exercise of his functions." Debates, p. 129. The Conference acting on these principles, suspended Bishop Andrew. Is it possible that an Episcopacy which may be removed summarily, without trial or the slightest impeachment of moral character, can be anti-Republican!!! You are particularly un-

fortunate in quoting Mr. Hamline's speech, in support of your groundless allegation. If the sentiments of that speech be true, we are excessively Republican, and our bishops are more perfectly shorn of power than any other ministers in our body. Moreover, had you possessed a copy of that speech, and not gotten it at second hand, you would have better understood the nature of the removals he speaks of—that they do not affect in the smallest degree the Christian or ministerial rights or functions of the party removed. He says: "My mind, sir, (if not my words), has all along distinguished between orders and office." The summary removals which I have noticed, are from office, not from the ministry. In regard to ordained preachers, these two rules will hold:

First: they cannot be expelled from the ministry summarily, but must have a trial in due form. Secondly: they cannot be expelled for improper conduct, but only for a crime forbidden in the word of God. These rules, with few exceptions, will apply to private members; they cannot usually be expelled from the Church without trial, or the offer of trial; (I add, too, by a jury of their peers) nor for improper conduct.

The mistaken view you have taken of Mr. Hamline's speech, and the blunder you committed in referring to it, will punish you justly for your readiness to take our Church documents in a garbled form, from the hands of our enemies. The fact that the summary removals are not from the ministry, will extinguish your momentary joy, and leave only a mortifying consciousness of ignorance of our system. The removals then, which you imagined to be so utterly anti-Republican, are exactly

similar to the frequent removals made by the President of the United States, when he transfers summarily, and without trial, the captain of one naval vessel to the command of another, or the general of one division of the army to the command of another division.

Bishop Andrew might still have preached the gospel, administered the sacraments, or presided over a Church or district, in perfect accordance with the wish of the General Conference which suspended him from the Episcopal office. His orders were not touched; it was only his permanent moderatorship over the Conferences which was affected by the suspension.

The President of the United States does immensely more of this work of summarily removing from office; and his removals affect the parties removed to a vastly greater extent, in both powers and emoluments. The executive officers of our government, under the President, are not supposed to be divinely called to their office, and their removal utterly extinguishes their official powers—as in the removal of the Cabinet, and Custom House officers, governors of territories, and the recall of ambassadors. These removals do not, however, impair their rights of citizenship. But in the Church, the ministers thereof are called by the Spirit of God, to their sacred work; hence, nothing but crime can subject them to be divested by any Church power whatever, of their ministerial prerogatives. Can you not favor us with a pretty burst of indignation at the utterly anti-Republican right of summary removal without trial, accusation, or appeal, by the President of the United States. Do “look it sternly in the face,” and try

your chivalry on this depotic assumption, "growing up under the boughs of the tree of liberty!" ha! ha! ha!

Your companion in arms, Mr. Ross, of Brownlow Review notoriety, seems to have fallen into the same ditch. I leave you to sympathize with him, and when he again pronounces Methodism Anti-Christ, I will tell him Bro. Henderson says, not so, sir; "Methodists love our common Lord, and have exhibited a zeal in his cause [and of course, not the cause of Anti-Christ] worthy of all praise." When your nerves recover from the shock they have received at the idea of summary removal from office, for unacceptability to the people, by an agent whose will is omnipotent in the premises: albeit, he himself is subject to a like removal, if he use this power improperly, you will see in this feature of the government of Methodism, a striking likeness to that feature in our civil government, which reposes similar power, but to a vastly greater extent, in the President of the United States.

ANALOGY.

I again repeat, sir, there are differences, such as I have before shown, between Church government and civil government; namely, that in the Church, Christ is the sole legislator; Christ calls the ministry to their sacred office; the Church can inflict no civil pains and penalties whatever; and in the Methodist Church, at least, if not in the Baptist Church, the members can withdraw at pleasure. Within these limitations, the government of the Methodist Church is as perfect a model of our civil government, as any Church on the Ame-

rican continent can possibly be, and far more perfectly like the government of the United States than your Church government. Look at the points of resemblance. Everywhere with us, the right of trial by jury is acknowledged. In our Conferences, the Democratic principle is established, that none should make laws but those who are themselves subject to them; but that in all things in which the laity are equally interested with the ministry, namely, in all our grand financial and other enterprises, they have equal suffrage and management. The itinerancy is constituted by two distinct acts of the membership, who first pass upon the qualifications of the candidates for the itinerancy, before the Conference can receive them; and then the itinerancy, like our legislatures or Congress, which elect their Speakers or President of Senates, elects its own officers. Our State legislature elects its Senators; so, also, does our Annual Conference its members of the General Conference. The Senate of the United States confirms the nominations of the President to the Cabinet, to the Courts of Europe, and, most important of all, the nominations to a lifetime office in the Supreme Courts of the land—the Judiciary of the United States. And these officers in turn appoint their subalterns, until, often, the chain of appointments is removed several links from the people. So, also, our General Conference appoints our bishops and editors; only that in the Methodist Church government, our appointments are not carried by many links so far from our people as in the civil government. The analogy between the two governments, within the limitations specified, is the closest, perhaps, that ever existed in our free country. If you charge such a go-

vernment with being anti-Republican, consistency, it seems to me, would demand of you that you should devote your talents to the destruction of our civil government, of which the government of Methodism is so perfect a model.

With reference to the disorders in the Methodist Church, they are exceptions—few and far between—but with the Baptist Church, they are of common occurrence. Of course, you will not condemn the Southern Methodist Church for instituting legal process for the recovery of rights, denied by an abolition sentiment. Moreover, the very suit in question was conducted in so kind a spirit, as to elicit the admiration of the legal gentlemen connected with it. That your disorders are of common occurrence, is not surprising to any one who considers the incongruous elements of your system of government; which cannot properly be called a government at all. They exist at all times. Hear the language of the Baptist papers, your own recent exchanges: "The Bible Union, at its anniversary refused to disclaim fellowship with the sentiments of Alexander Campbell."

Again: "What a melancholy spectacle is now exhibited in the Baptist denomination, in some sections of our country; brethren who ought to love each other, have been indulging in mutual criminations of character, so virulent, as would inevitably have produced bloodshed, had the same epithets been employed in political controversy." (Biblical Recorder, N. C., June 7th.) "The object of the leaders of the Bible Union is to rule or ruin the denomination." (Tennessee Baptist.) From the preamble and resolutions of the Alum Creek Baptist Church, Ohio, we learn that "Peter Fitzgerald had been

excluded, and had manifested no repentance for the crimes for which he was excluded." Two years after his exclusion, the Berlin Church, in the same county, investigated the charges against Fitzgerald, and acquitted him. The Alum Creek Church thereupon resolved, "That we, as a Church, do solemnly protest against the conduct of said Berlin Church and council in said premises, as immoral in its tendency, and, as such, *we disclaim fellowship with all such acts of Popery.* J. Frey, Moderator." (Journal and Messenger, Cincinnati, June 1st.) So it seems you have some Popery in your Church, as your own poets say. Once more: "In the mountains, a custom long prevailed, that Churches considered it a part of their Republican privilege to choose their pastoral supply from year to year:" accordingly, Thomas Stradley, anticipating this result, resigned his pastoral charge, but the party opposed to him, not being ready to carry out their point, deferred the election until the next meeting, at which twenty voted for him, and fifteen for James Blythe. On Sunday, when Stradley went to preach, "James Blythe and his party set up opposition preaching, within sixty or seventy yards of the Church." This is stated in a letter from Thomas Stradley, jr., to the Carolina Intelligencer, June 14th. Such are a few of the specimens of all kinds of disorder existing in the Baptist Church to this very day.

I will gladly relieve your mind upon the question of the falsity charged upon certain positions taken against Methodism. If you look over my letters again, you will find I have not applied the term falsehood to any thing connected with our discussion. I pronounced the au-

thor of the article from the "Watchman," a slanderer. I affirmed that certain propositions extracted from it were false. I add now, that they were grossly slanderous. You know the distinction between the terms false and falsehood—the former simply denies the truthfulness of the matter in question—the latter charges the author of it with lying. Saul of Tarsus, when he deemed Christ an imposter, no doubt, uttered what was untrue, yet he was not a liar; but when Peter denied his Master, he uttered a falsehood, or in plainer speech, he lied. Under the influence of prejudice, and in almost total ignorance of our system, you have sadly misrepresented Methodism; in sincerity, no doubt, or you would not have opened your columns for this discussion. Nevertheless, the positions which were false in the "Watchman," are no less false in your endorsement of them. And no less untrue are your own glaring errors, which I have so often been called to correct; such, for instance, as that great mistake affecting vitally the rights of membership in our Churches—that a bishop can reinstate an expelled member, and "the word of a bishop is the end of all strife." And now, brother, I wot that through ignorance you did it, as do also other rulers among you. Your fault lies not in being unacquainted with Methodism, but in attacking us without provocation, when you knew not what you did. It is not congenial with my spirit to point out the defective workings of your disjointed government. I would rather look upon the Christian enterprise and sweet piety of many of your members.

Nor do I look upon your government as anti-Republican. I cannot use the word in so loose a sense; for

nothing can be *anti*-Republican but that which would overthrow a Republic; and I have no fears that you will attempt that: albeit your system be never so unlike our civil government, to which Methodism bears so striking a resemblance. And withal, the good sense and piety of your members will make you prosperous, in spite of the defects of your ecclesiastical economy.

With assurances of Christian regard,

I subscribe myself, yours in Christ,

E. J. HAMILL.

August 16th, 1855.

REPLY TO LETTER V.

METHODIST CHURCH PROPERTY CASE.

The "sun" and "moon" of "our Episcopacy" slightly eclipsed; An interesting engagement between the two wings of the "terrible army with banners;" A circuit rider slain, and a bishop put *hors de combat*; "Our Episcopacy" sues "our Episcopacy;" Two important principles evolved in the suit; Extracts from the speeches of Messrs. Lord and Johnson, the counsel for the claimants; Episcopal Methodism an aristocracy, which "admits no constituents;" The decision of the court; Each party recognizing the decision, the one by yielding to, the other by accepting the award; The relative ability of the United States Court, and "an obscure local organ," to injure "our Episcopacy;" Sorrowful sight; More than a million of the "rank and file" of the "terrible army" slain at "one fell swoop;" More about the "Democratic element."

Friendly greeting; Reasonable expectations disappointed; The Munster affair again; A civil, not a religious movement; A *sprinkling of sprinklers* among the insurgents; Buck; The *Ink Fish*; An interesting syllogism; The "four points" vindicated; Episcopal remedy for Church disorders worse than the disease; Dead palsy; Ministers' and deacons' meetings again; A practical question propounded to the laity of the Methodist Episcopal Church; "Hendersonian" logic; A "strictness of speech" that cuts two ways; No legislative authority given to the Churches by Christ and the Apostles; A stride towards Rome; Some plain questions asked; The advantage which "our Episcopacy" *might have*

been to Paul and the Primitive Churches, in rectifying their disorders; "Duplicity;" Not responsible for results where facts are stated; Unkind insinuation in regard to Bishops McKendree and Bascom; The "man of straw" betraying tokens of sensibility; The charge of second-handed quotations, and garbling; An inquiry after the "symbols of faith called creeds" in the apostolic age; Supposed to be the New Testament; Those who adopt it as their only rule of faith and conduct have something which can be "accurately styled Church Government;" Satisfactory explanation.

"Now, therefore, there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"—1 Cor. vi. 7.

"Money is a defence."—SOLOMON.

It is proper that we again state the precise question at issue in this discussion. It is important that the reader should have it always distinctly before his mind. The question is this; *is Methodist Episcopacy in its nature and tendencies, anti-Democratic and anti-Republican?* In taking the affirmative of this proposition, we have distinctly stated from the commencement, that we are not attacking the patriotism of any man or set of men. We have been discussing a *principle* in ecclesiastical polity, which has in all ages of the world tended to abuse and corruption. We have been attempting to show that there is nothing in the Methodist complexion of Episcopacy, which has inclined us to change our opinion of its nature and practical results. Its origin and history up to this time, so far as our means of information extend, point unmistakeably to the same spiritual and temporal tyranny, which has marked its progress in every age of the world, since it first extinguished the rights of the Churches in the third and fourth centuries. And in pursuing our object, we have found it necessary

to bring to light some plain and startling facts—all of which has been done with no unkind feeling to a living soul. That there is a complexion of narrow-minded religious prejudice, which cannot comprehend how plain truths, told in a plain way, in regard to an organic principle of governmental economy, can comport with personal good will and christian charity, is by no means surprising. But then to yield to such an influence, would be to sacrifice *principle* to *policy*—the authority of God to the authority of man—and practically to declare that every reformation which has ever been attempted in religion, morals, and civil government, has been a curse to the world. And this we are not prepared to admit, even out of complaisance of “the largest denomination of Christians” in this country. The more extensive and wide-spread the evil, the greater the cause for alarm.

We now propose to examine the “Methodist Episcopal Church Property Case,” as argued and decided in the United States Circuit Court for the Southern District of New York, printed and circulated under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and North. We shall try and be as brief as possible, so as to dispose of it in a single article, though we assure the reader that a volume could be profitably written upon this single case.

And let us premise here, that if the “Democratic element” really exists in the system, it certainly could not have eluded the perception of the learned counsel and Court who argued and adjudicated that case. If ever an occasion offered itself in which to elucidate the *ar- cana* of “our Episcopacy,” surely this was the occasion.

The whole history of its establishment and practical workings, for nearly three-quarters of a century, was placed in evidence before the Court, and expounded with distinguished ability by the most learned counsel on both sides. *The powers of the clergy, the bishops and travelling preachers, was the point* to be argued and decided before that august tribunal. We shall recognise the "Property Case," then, as involving an authentic, reliable exposition of Episcopal Methodism.

When the ministers of any denomination assume the management and control of its property, they not only adopt the very principle which all civil despots have done to enslave the people, but are guilty at the same time, of departing from the great work to which they profess to have been called by the Holy Ghost. The tribe of Levi, who were the spiritual teachers of religion, were not allowed to own one foot of land, or indeed any other kind of property. The Apostles themselves would not so much as consent to disburse the benefactions of the Church at Jerusalem, among the poor, but asked *the Church* to elect seven deacons, a kind of board of managers, to attend to this business, so that they "could give themselves entirely to the word of God and prayer." Observe, they did not appoint these deacons themselves, but requested the Church to do it. We beg the reader to observe this principle, as we proceed to analyze this "case."

In 1844, the General Conference assembled in the City of New York. A case was carried up to it from the State of Maryland, to this effect: A Mr. Harding, a travelling preacher, had been deposed from the ministry, by the Maryland Conference, because he was

a slave holder. Possessing the right of appeal, he applied to the General Conference for relief. That body, by a very large majority, *confirmed* the action of the Maryland Conference, in deposing Mr. Harding. Immediately the question recurred—If we depose a common *circuit rider* for being a slave holder, what shall we do with a *bishop* who is guilty of the same *crime*? Bishop ANDREW, of Georgia, (than whom a more amiable, meek, and pious man perhaps never *endured* the mitre,) was known to be a slave holder. This was the great question of the occasion. It brought on the engagement between the two wings of the “terrible army with banners.” And never, within the history of this Republic, has ecclesiastical domination made such arrogant assumptions to interfere with the civil, social, and domestic institutions of the country. Here is an aspect of Episcopacy which may well alarm the fears of the Christian and the patriot. A General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States arraigns one of its first officers, and holds over him the penalty of *degradation*, and for what? *For the crime of being a slave holder!*—assuming to interfere with an institution in the States, which the most rabid abolitionist declares Congress cannot do!

Well—the measure was carried. *Bishop Andrew was instructed to suspend the exercise of the functions of his bishopric, until he manumitted his slaves.* Whereupon the Southern members of the Conference brought in a solemn protest against the measure, as “extra judicial.” That protest was answered by a committee appointed on the part of the majority. Dr. Capers (the late bishop) introduced a series of resolutions contemplating a peaceful separa-

tion of the South from the North, and the organization of a Southern General Conference. These resolutions also ceded to the Southern members, provided they should form such an organization, "all the Churches, schools, colleges, cemeteries," &c., lying within their specified territory, and authorized the managers of the "Book Concern" to negotiate an equitable division of its funds with such commissioners as might be appointed from the South. These resolutions were passed by a decided majority. And here let it be distinctly noted, that the bishops and clergy of this Conference, assumed the proprietorship of "all the Churches, schools, colleges, Book Concern," &c., belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. Time and again the impression has been sought to be made, during this discussion, that, "with regard to the business in which the laity are equally interested with the ministry—such business as constitutes the sphere of operations" of Baptist Conventions, State and general, they (the Methodist Episcopal Church) "have already lay delegation, and lay management"—and that it is only "the privilege of scattering" the "ministers to the four winds," appointing them to their respective fields of labor, that the laity have no voice. See Bro. Hamill's third letter. Are the laymen of that Church "equally interested with the ministry," in the Churches, schools, colleges, cemeteries, Book Concern? &c. Bro. Hamill will not deny this. And yet, when the Bishops and clergy in General Conference assembled, assert a proprietorship in, and a right to dispose of, all this immense aggregation of Church property in the United States, not a single layman's voice was ever heard in

the council that argued, or the vote that decided the fate of this measure! Nay, further: in the parties litigant in the famous lawsuit we propose reviewing, as appears upon the face of the "bill," there is not the name of a single layman upon either side!

But to proceed: After the Conference adjourned, sundry scruples suggested themselves to the minds of the Northern managers of the "Book Concern," as to whether the seceding party, (the Southern division) could be legitimately recognized as a Methodist Episcopal Church—whether the admission of such a principle would not destroy the *unity of the Church*—whether the Church have the right to cut itself in twain, and thus commit a kind of moral suicide, &c. &c. They, therefore, refused to enter into the negotiation with the Southern commissioners, as directed by the General Conference. Under the leadership of Henry B. Bascom, than whom they could not have chosen a more chivalrous generalissimo, the Southern wing of the "terrible army with banners" organized its forces, and immediately issued a summons to the Northern wing of the "terrible army with banners," to "*meet them at Philippi!*" when and where, with "weapons of warfare that were *carnal*," they should decide who was to heir the "images and superscriptions" of Uncle Sam.

We wish that time and space would allow us to enter into the full merits of this case. We have only time to establish two points which directly bear upon the question we are discussing.

First: *That the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, in its governmental economy, is nothing more nor less than the bishops and travelling clergy.*

Secondly: THAT THEY HAVE NO CONSTITUENTS. They are sovereign, and are accountable to no power on earth but to their own consciences.

Now for the proof of these propositions. Mr. Lord, one of the council for the claimants, spoke as follows: "In vain you look into this Methodist system, prior to 1808, for any restrictions on the General Conference of that Church. If that body had chosen to become Socinian; if it had chosen to adopt the Presbyterian or Baptist forms, either of government or of doctrine, it was in its power to do it. There was no limit. They represented the Church—*they were the Church*. The Church dispersed its light from the preachers. The laity were not known in the governing body. Matters of doctrine, discipline, and everything were in the governing body. If that was so up to 1808, what was that body after that period? *It was the same General Conference.*" Prop. Case, p. 163.

The Hon. REVERDY JOHNSON, who also represented the Southern Commissioners in that case, spoke thus: "This Church, be it remembered, even unto the present time, and I speak it in no offensive sense, as regards its government, has been absolutely, since the days of Wesley, *an aristocracy*. Laymen have had, and now have no voice in it. If there is a layman within the sound of my voice, *he knows he has no voice now*. Heretofore, they have been satisfied with the government. They have acted upon the saying of Pope—

‘For forms of government let fools contest,
That which is best administered, is best.’

They perhaps will be found changing their opinion, when they find that it is not always best administered.

"Now I want to know, if the entire sovereign power of the Church was in the ministers, the preachers, what other body on the face of God's earth was there in 1808 upon which to devolve the power of dividing the Church, which must have been in the ministers, than the Conference of 1808. The ministers made the Church. *The ministers, in the governmental sense, are the Church.* The sovereigns are the ministers, and if it be a part of the sovereign power, in a body of this description, to divide itself, then that power existed in the Conference of ministers of 1808, or it is gone. The admission is, that it cannot be extinguished. It is absolute, inherent, and alienable, as my brother, Mr. Choate, admitted. A body unlimited in the authority to create, is equally unlimited in the authority to destroy, responsible only to their consciences for the manner in which either authority is exercised." *Meth. Ch. Property Case*, p. 331.

Again: on page 328, speaking of the action of the Conference of 1784, Mr. Johnson said—"They admit no constituency. *The time is perhaps coming, when in all probability, they will be obliged to admit one for the good of the Church.* They resolve for themselves, *and for themselves ALONE*, as the possessors of ALL ECCLESIASTICAL POWER known to the Methodist Church, to carry out the particular organization authorized by John Wesley, *without any other authority than his*, and their own conviction that the good of the Church demanded such a special and particular organization." And still further, on page 329, Mr. J. continues: "No *modicum* of power was left elsewhere. The Church was not to look elsewhere *for any portion of authority.*" We could quote much more to the same purpose, but this is sufficient.

Now, let us sum up this evidence. Here are two of the first lawyers in the Union, employed by the complainants, the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to defend their rights to an equitable division of "Church property" before the United States' Circuit Court, relying wholly upon the evidence which *they* furnished to their hand, declaring what? That the Conference of 1784, composed of sixty travelling preachers, with Messrs Asbury and Coke at their head, in adopting the doctrines and discipline of that Church, "admit no constituency"—that "not one particle of power was left elsewhere—that laymen have had, and now have *no voice in it—that the ministers compose the Church—that in a governmental sense THEY ARE THE CHURCH—that it is absolutely an ARISTOCRACY—that it possesses unlimited power to create and to destroy—that it could have become Socinian had it chosen to do so—and that it is responsible to no tribunal on earth but the consciences of those who wield its authority!" All this, and much more of like character, was solemnly pronounced, as already intimated, by two of the ablest lawyers of the United States, before one of the highest judicial functionaries of the country, as an exposition of Methodist Episcopacy, and published to the world under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and North! And yet for daring to question its Republicanism, we are to be denounced by its patented journals as a *demagogue*, a *bigot*, an *ignoramus*, a *legitimate child of the father of lies!**

But we have higher evidence than all this to sustain our position. After the case was elaborately argued by such men as Johnson, Choate, Lord and Wood, Judge

NELSON delivered the opinion of the Court, from which we make the following extract:

" 2. As to the power of the General Conference to authorise a separation of the Church organization.

The Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States was established, in its government, doctrine, and discipline, by a General Conference of the travelling preachers in this communion, in 1784. Down to that time, the Methodist Societies in America had been governed by John Wesley, the founder of this denomination of Christians, through the agency of his assistants. During this year, the entire government was taken into the hands of the travelling preachers with his approbation and assent. They organized it, established its doctrines and discipline, appointed the several authorities—superintendents or bishops, ministers and preachers—to administer its polity, and promulgate its doctrines and teaching throughout the land. From that time to this, the source and fountain of all its temporal power are the travelling preachers in this connection in General Conference assembled. The lay members of the Church have no part or connection with its governmental organization, and never had. The travelling preachers comprise the embodiment of its power, ecclesiastical and temporal; and, when assembled in General Conference according to the usages and discipline of the Church, represent themselves, and have no constituents: and thus the organization continued until the year 1808, when a modification took place." Appendix Prop. Case, pp. 10, 11.

The "modification" to which Judge Nelson alludes, relates to the organization of a General out of the Annual Conferences, which occurred in 1808. The Judge then proceeds to show that that modification did not affect in the slightest degree the principle he had laid down, to wit: That the bishops and clergy in General

Conference assembled embodied all the power, "ecclesiastical and temporal," known in their governmental economy.

The decision of the Court, then, sustains every position taken by the counsel. We will state these positions again in still fewer words, confirmed by the extract from the opinion of the Court: All the *derived* power which the bishops and clergy of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever had came, *not from the Churches*, but from John Wesley—they established its doctrines and discipline—created its officers to administer its polity—they are the source and fountain of all its power—laymen have no connection with its governmental organization and never had—and when assembled in General Conference according to the usage and discipline of the Church, *represent themselves*, AND HAVE NO CONSTITUENTS! No *bill of exceptions* was filed to this decision. The Methodist Episcopal Church, North, yielded to, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, accepted the award! Both divisions of the Church stand committed to this decision, as containing a true and faithful exposition of the governmental economy of that Church. Why have we never heard these lawyers and Judges denounced as *demagogues* and *bigots*—and as ignorant of the subject they were adjudicating? They aver, that so far as government is concerned, (and that is the ONLY subject we are discussing,) the bishops and travelling clergy are, *de facto*, THE CHURCH—that in its legislative and administrative economy, its lay members are unknown—that it is an *aristocracy*—and *has no constituents*. Now, if all this were untrue, can any man suppose for one moment, that the North would have yielded its claim to four hundred thousand dollars, and that the

South would have accepted it? Is the "Democratic element" in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, *if it ever existed*, worth only four hundred thousand dollars? And yet, to secure that pitiful sum, the six hundred thousand private members in the Southern division of that Church, and, we may add, a larger number in the Northern division, aggregating a million and a half, or nearly so, of American citizens, are recognized by the public records of the country, in their ecclesiastical relations, as *below the rank of common citizens*—AS BEING NO CONSTITUENTS!! We do not design to introduce degrading comparisons; but we must be permitted to ask, what more humiliating language could be used in regard to the subjects of the most absolute despotisms on earth, than that they "*are no constituents?*" Methodists! local preachers and private members! lovers of God, of truth, of liberty, and of your country!

"If you have nature in you, bear it not!"

"*The travelling preachers comprise the embodiment of its power, ECCLESIASTICAL AND TEMPORAL; and when assembled in General Conference, according to the usage and discipline of the Church, represent themselves, and HAVE NO CONSTITUENTS!*" What more have *we ever said?* Why is it, we again ask, that Judges NELSON and BETTS, the Hon. REVERDY JOHNSON, and his colleagues, have never been held to account for uttering such language as this? Was it because four hundred thousand dollars depended upon the maintenance of these doctrines? Or rather was it not because THEY ~~SPOKE~~ *THE TRUTH?* Why is it that they have escaped the ecclesiastical lash of the guardians of episcopacy, religious and political, while "*an obscure local organ,*" to

use the very *delicate* and *respectful* language of a Methodist contemporary, for alleging nothing more than this, is to be denounced as guilty of "the lowest piece of *demagoguism*, and narrow minded *bigotry* that has yet transpired!"* The United States Court was certainly capable of inflicting a more serious injury upon "our Episcopacy" than an "obscure local organ." And yet, when that decision was announced, the editors of all the Methodist journals, South, congratulated themselves and their Church, upon the successful termination of the suit, and accepted the award of the Court without so much as questioning, so far as we know, a single principle upon which it was made. "Our Episcopacy" sues "our Episcopacy" at one of the highest judicial tribunals of the country. The parties litigant prove to the satisfaction of the counsel and judges, that the bishops and travelling preachers "made the Church;" that the bishops and travelling preachers "are, in the governmental sense, THE CHURCH;" that "this Church ever has been, and is now ABSOLUTELY AN ARISTOCRACY;" that they "admit no constituency, and have no constituency." And the solemn claim is set up by these champions, that Methodist Episcopacy, as a distinct form of government, not only harmonizes with, but wonderfully illustrates and strengthens those great fundamental principles which constitute the substratum of our glorious Republic; that all men are created equal; that all power is inherent in the people; and, that the will of the people, constitutionally expressed, is the law of the land!! He that can believe it, let him! All we have to say is, we envy not the huge dimensions of that credulity, which can swallow that camel.

* N. O. Christian Advocate.

Such, then, was the engagement between the two wings of this "terrible army with banners." Let us now survey the field of battle, after this "terrible" conflict, and try to estimate the "loss and gain" upon each side of the combatants. The Southern wing of the "terrible army" lost a circuit rider (Harding) and had a bishop (Andrew) put *hors de combat*, among the regular officers of the line. The Northern wing lost about four hundred thousand dollars, which of course was gained by the Southern wing, and which, to that extent, compensated for the loss of their officers. But now as to the "rank and file" upon either side—the heart sickens at the scene of carnage.

"If you have tears, prepare to shed them now."

Up to the time of the commencement of this engagement, it was understood by the official organs of the two wings, that the "constituency," the common soldiers of the "terrible army," amounted in the aggregate to about one million two or three hundred thousand. But alas! from the despatches which have reached us from the scene of conflict, signed and sealed by the proper officers, not one common soldier survives, to commemorate in verse or history, the deeds of valor which were performed at Philippi! The despatch reads—"THEY HAVE NO CONSTITUENTS!" They had claimed up to that date, "a constituency" of between a million and a million and a half. At the close of the engagement, Judge NELSON declares there is none! no, not one! Marathon, Actium, and Waterloo—Saratoga, New Orleans and Sebastopol—hide you diminished heads! Here is a "terrible army with banners," which, at one fell swoop,

annihilates a "constituency" of almost a million and a half!

But look at another aspect of this power claimed for the bishops and travelling clergy in General Conference assembled. Says Mr. Lord, one of the counsel for the complainants, and of course good authority with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, "If that body (the General Conference) had chosen to become SOCINIAN; if it had chosen to adopt the PRESBYTERIAN or BAPTIST forms, either of government or doctrine, it was in its power to do it." What! change the whole Methodist denomination in the United States into a Socinian body? Or into a Presbyterian or Baptist organization, both in discipline and doctrine? "Yes," says Mr. Lord, "there was no limit; they represented the Church; THEY WERE THE CHURCH;" "They admit no constituents," responds Mr. Johnson; "They have no constituents," says the Court! Now, so far as we know, none of the organs of that Church had ever denied these positions of the counsel and Court. Indeed, upon their successful maintenance, depended the issue of the pending suit. If the sovereign power did not belong to the bishops and clergy of that Church, they had no right to divide its property. But if the sovereign power did reside there; if "not a *modicum* of power was left elsewhere,"—then, as a matter of course, that power could be exercised upon all questions of doctrine or discipline without being responsible to any authority for its exercise "but their own consciences." Need we ask, can the most stubborn incredulity itself deny, if this be a faithful exposition of Episcopal Methodism, THAT IT IS A SYSTEM OF CLERICAL ABSOLUTISM.

Now, reader, do you not agree with us that it will take a microscope of a hundred fold more power than has yet revealed the wonders of a universe in a single drop of water, to discover the "Democratic element" in a system which "admits no constituents"—which "has no constituents."

We congratulate Brother Hamill upon his safe return to the people of his charge. With a right good will we again bid him welcome to our columns, sincerely trusting that his respite will enable him to enlighten us more fully upon the Democracy of "our Episcopacy." Again, also, must we commend him for the very kind spirit which pervades his article. It is so very different from that which has been manifested towards us by sundry of his brethren, in several of the "*Advocates*," that the task of responding to it is a real pleasure to us. We trust that this discussion will prove one thing to the sensitive and censorious, and that is, *that it is possible for Christian men to discuss their differences with the kindest feelings to each other, as well as in a Christian spirit.*

We had hoped, after the lapse of so many weeks, that our brother was preparing an article entirely upon the question at issue between us. When lo! the very first paragraph contains another allusion to the "madmen of Munster," as they are called. On reflection, however, we suppose that the Munster insurrection has about as much connection with Methodist Episcopacy, as Methodist Episcopacy has with American Democracy. We suppose we must inform our brother that that movement

in Germany was *not* a religious, but a political one. Its promoters were what were subsequently known in England as "fifth monarchy men." Various sects were engaged in it. One of its leaders, on one occasion, *sprinkled* several hundreds of his followers with a mop—somewhat after the manner Mr. Wesley supposed John sprinkled the crowds that came to his ministry on the banks of the Jordan. Now, it strikes us that this is not exactly Baptist. Buck says: "It must be acknowledged that the true rise of the insurrection of this period ought not to be attributed to *religious opinions*." "A great part were Ana-Baptists. * * * A great part also, were Roman Catholics, and a still greater part had no religious principles at all."

Then follows a pretty long episode upon "close communion" and "Baptist anarchy." Indeed, most of the article is taken up with the latter subject. Now, Bro. Hamill, if you could demonstrate, not only to the satisfaction of every Methodist, but of every thinking man on earth, that Baptist Churches in this country were lineally descended from the Munster insurrectionists—nay, further, that the first Baptist Church was organized in the bottomless pit, and was one of the "unclean spirits" which John saw issuing from the mouth of "the beast"—what would all that have to do with the plain, practical question at issue between us—"Is Methodist Episcopacy anti-Republican?" Ichthyologists inform us, that there belongs to the finny tribe, a singular species, which has the power, when pursued by an enemy, of throwing out a dark, muddy substance, which has much the same effect upon the water that a cloud has upon the atmosphere. And having created this pavilion of

darkness, it very dexterously eludes the pursuit of its foe. It is called the "*Ink Fish*." *Verbum sat*.

Seriously, Brother Hamill, what would "Hedge" pronounce of your logic, if the foregoing were adduced as specimens! You set out to show, what? Why "the striking analogy between the Methodist Church government and the government of the United States." This you do, first by appealing to the insurrection among the peasants of Germany, in the sixteenth century; secondly, to "close communion," as you call it, as practised among Baptists; and thirdly, to Baptist anarchy! That is—there was an insurrection in Germany, in the sixteenth century—moreover, the Baptists practice "close communion,"—and still further, (how astonishingly cumulative the argument?) Baptist Churches sometimes get into confusion: *Therefore*, there is a "striking analogy between the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the government of the United States!" Shades of Locke, Reid, and Hedge! what profound reasoning! But, as already intimated, that penetration which can evolve the "Democratic element" in "our Episcopacy," can find no difficulty in *demonstrating* the logical connection between the premises and conclusion of the above argument.

The *four points* we suggested as organic elements in a New Testament Church, are "partly correct," but "may need some emendation." Well, what are these emendations? *First*, as to the constituency of a gospel Church, Brother Hamill's answer varies from ours only so far as to include, we suppose, "seekers." But as we did not set out to ascertain the constituency of a Methodist, but an Apostolic Church, there is no need of a

serious reply. Our position remains impregnable, that in the Apostles' age, Churches were composed of "saints, faithful brethren, the sanctified, saved," &c. Secondly: to our question—Are these *saints* and *faithful ones* competent to govern themselves—he answers: "They are, within certain limitations." These limitations are, that Christ has given the fundamental laws—that the Spirit calls men to the ministry—that the Church may judge who are called to the holy office—positions, these, which Baptists have held from time immemorial—and finally, "to bear some sort of rule in the Church of God, as Paul saith, 'Remember them who have the rule over you,' &c. *and may also do whatever else is necessary for good government!*" Pretty large margin this, Brother Hamill. Who are to judge of what is necessary for "good government," the rulers or the governed? It reminds us of the last article in the rules of a well known academy in a neighboring State: That as no system of rules could meet every emergency, especially in the government of naughty boys, *much would be left to the discretion of the teachers*. Reader, is not our brother demonstrating the "*democratic element*" with a vengeance? *Thirdly*: Has the New Testament inculcated any form of Church government? His answer to this is somewhat like "our Episcopacy," a little difficult to understand. If, however, we can comprehend his meaning, he answers it negatively. He thinks from the "brevity of Scripture, the variety of mental character, *the fallibility of even good men*," &c., that confessions of faith, or creeds," may "serve as points of union among Christians, and as defences against the encroachments of error." Now, there is but one way to test the

correctness of any principle; and that is to observe its practical operation. A few plain questions and answers may suggest to the mind of the reader all that need be said upon this point. What *divides* the various denominations of Christians from each other? Creeds. What keeps up this division, and makes it more marked every year? Creeds. What is the first thing that every new sect does that springs up in the country? It "draws up a symbol of faith, called a creed." Does this effect a "union" of this sect "among Christians?" It *separates* its members *from* all other Christians. What is the first step to effect a union among all Christians? The destruction of that which now separates them—their creeds. What is the next step? The adoption of the Bible, and the Bible only, as the entire rule of faith and practice. The truth is, human creeds may make pretty good servants, but most wretched masters. Our brother gives one very singular reason why this discretionary power should be left in the hands of men. It is the "*fallibility even of good men.*" *Human fallibility*, it seems to us, is a pretty good reason why "even good" but uninspired men, should not be trusted to draft a constitution for a *divine* government. As to "creeds" being barriers to "error," we think the reverse. We think that they foster error. A Presbyterian denounces Methodism as "anti-Christ." A Methodist avers that the cherished dogma of Presbyterianism, "eternal, particular, unconditional election," emanated from the bottomless pit, and that it will return thither. *Are they both right?* And how long will it take their "creeds" to effect a union among these "Christians?" But, *Fourthly*, to the question: Do the Churches belong to the ministry, or

the ministry to the Churches? our brother responds: "Neither, but both," &c., and to prove this, he refers to a passage, upon which all despotic hierarchies have always insisted, "expounding it with a richness and an unction as if the very substance of God's message to man were therein summarily comprehended," says Isaac Taylor. The passage is this—"Obey them that have the rule over you in the Lord." But in what were they to obey them? Why clearly in their spiritual instructions and admonitions? Ministers are members of the Churches, and as such have all the rights of other members. The office to which they are called, is a spiritual, not a temporal office. The injunction is purely a spiritual one, for the Apostle immediately adds, "they (these ministers) watch for souls." Does it need a serious argument to prove that Churches have the right to control that which emanates from themselves—the property? Yet Judge NELSON, as we have seen, declares that in the Methodist Episcopal Church, "the travelling preachers comprise the embodiment of its power, ecclesiastical and temporal," &c. So that Episcopal Methodism places in the hands of its bishops, and travelling clergy, all power, spiritual and temporal, known in its organization. "Not a *modicum* of it is left elsewhere." It is, therefore, in the true and proper sense of that term, a system of CLERICAL ABSOLUTISM. Our brother speaks of the "checks and balances" of the system. Where are these "checks and balances?" Bishop Hamline affirms that they recognize "no tribunal to cure errors or rectify wrongs." Mr. Johnson avers, "they are responsible to no authority but their own

correctness of any principle; and that is to observe its practical operation. A few plain questions and answers may suggest to the mind of the reader all that need be said upon this point. What *divides* the various denominations of Christians from each other? Creeds. What keeps up this division, and makes it more marked every year? Creeds. What is the first thing that every new sect does that springs up in the country? It "draws up a symbol of faith, called a creed." Does this effect a "union" of this sect "among Christians?" It *separates* its members *from* all other Christians. What is the first step to effect a union among all Christians? The destruction of that which now separates them—their creeds. What is the next step? The adoption of the Bible, and the Bible only, as the entire rule of faith and practice. The truth is, human creeds may make pretty good servants, but most wretched masters. Our brother gives one very singular reason why this discretionary power should be left in the hands of men. It is the "*fallibility even of good men.*" *Human fallibility*, it seems to us, is a pretty good reason why "even good" but uninspired men, should not be trusted to draft a constitution for a *divine* government. As to "creeds" being barriers to "error," we think the reverse. We think that they foster error. A Presbyterian denounces Methodism as "anti-Christ." A Methodist avers that the cherished dogma of Presbyterianism, "eternal, particular, unconditional election," emanated from the bottomless pit, and that it will return thither. *Are they both right?* And how long will it take their "creeds" to effect a union among these "Christians?" But, *Fourthly*, to the question: Do the Churches belong to the ministry, or

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consciences" for the exercise of their power. Where, then, are its "checks and balances?" We claim, then, that all our positions remain impregnable.

But our apology for disorders among Baptist Churches, was quite lame. So, doubtless, the friends of monarchy think in regard to our "apologies" for occasional outbreaks in our popular form of government—such as is now rife in the State of Massachusetts in regard to the fugitive slave law. They could, no doubt read us many lectures upon monarchy as being a "system of surpassing energy." Now, the only reasons why we cannot accept the remedy which "our Episcopacy" proposes for these evils, are, First: It is unscriptural, as we think; Secondly: It is *worse than the disease*. The *dead palsy* would free us from all sensations of pain, heat, cold, wounds, and strokes. It is a "system of surpassing energy." Indeed, it is a kind of universal *panacea* for all diseases. Once let it fasten upon the system, and we are molested no more with other "disorders." But——; the reader can supply the commentary.

That "exceedingly powerful advice," given at the Tuskegee ministers' and deacons' meeting, still haunts our brother's imagination. It was an "inquisitorial tax!" Now, reader, we attended that meeting, as we have already informed you, and participated in its proceedings in some humble degree; and the sum and substance of that "threatened exclusion" and "inquisitorial tax" was this: The members who composed that meeting, expressed their opinions in two resolutions, introduced by a private member—First: That covetousness was idolatry, and that no idolator ought to be retained in the Church. This is the "threatened exclu-

sion!" Secondly: That in meeting the necessary expenses of our Churches, we ought to obey the rule laid down by Paul, viz.: That every man should contribute "according as God hath prospered him." And this is the "inquisitorial taxation!" The issue upon these points is not between us and Brother Hamill, but between him and God's word. The "fig leaf" was placed there by the divine penman. Let him "tear it away" if he can.

Yes, we do cling to the allegation, that your bishops and travelling clergy imposed articles of faith and a form of government upon your members without their consent. The Conference which adopted your Book of Discipline "represented themselves, and had no constituents," says Judge Nelson. "He who has no right to the thing he possesses," says Dr. Barrow, "cannot prescribe or plead any length of time to make his possession lawful." If the original exercise of this power were arbitrary; if it "admitted no constituency;" if it were underived; then its exercise for a thousand years never can make it anything else. We have a practical question to ask—not Brother Hamill, nor any bishop or clergyman of his Church, but the laity—those who, but for the occurrence of the "Church Property Case," we would call "the Church,"—and it is this: *If the adoption of your form of government, your Episcopacy, were now an original question, and your General Conference were to grant you the same privilege which the National Convention, who formed our federal constitution, gave to the several States, to receive or reject it, HOW MANY OF YOU WOULD VOTE FOR IT? How many of you would adopt, voluntarily, a form of government, if your rulers would allow you the privilege, which would not recognize you as "constituents?"*

But our logic upon this point is peculiarly "Hendersonian." Now, we do not aspire to the distinction of founding a new school in logic. True, it does require a new system of logic to evolve the "Democratic element" in a system of government which "has no constituents." But we must beg our brother to believe us sincere when we say, we are too modest to aspire to that distinction. That a certain proposition should be either true or false, "is sheer nonsense," is it? Well, if our brother will enlighten us as to how much truth and falsehood may dwell together in the same proposition, in fraternal sympathy, we think he will make an achievement in logic which will bear the palm from us! "Did our preachers manufacture them?"—(faith and discipline, we suppose, he means)—asks Brother Hamill. "They organized it," answers Judge NELSON; "established its doctrines and discipline, appointed the several authorities—superintendents or bishops, ministers and preachers—to administer its polity, and promulgate its doctrines and teaching throughout the land." And yet, for saying that the bishops and clergy, in "establishing its doctrines and discipline," imposed them upon the Churches without their consent, we utter "sheer nonsense!" "If that body (the General Conference) had chosen to become SOCINIAN," says Mr. LORD, "if it had chosen to adopt the PRESBYTERIAN or BAPTIST forms, either of government or doctrine, IT WAS IN ITS POWER TO DO IT." Why? "Because," says Mr. JOHNSON, "it admitted no constituency." How is the weather now, Brother Hamill—"hot" or "cold?" Is our "logic lucid" enough?

"Our fathers taught that the Holy Scriptures con-

tained all things necessary to salvation." Very well; we only wish their children would believe them.

But "in strictness of speech, there can be no such thing as the Baptist Church." True, Brother Hamill, and we thank God for it. Baptists repudiate such vernacular as implies such a centralization of power as that phrase does. We have Baptist Churches—but to apply the term "THE BAPTIST CHURCH" to this community of Churches, is a phrase not of our coining. In the New Testament, when a single Church is intended, it is so named—"the Church at Ephesus"—"the Church at Corinth," &c. But when a district of country is alluded to, in which there are several Churches, the phraseology is changed; and we read of "the seven Churches of Asia,"—"as in all the Churches of the saints," &c. Now, suppose we adopt Bro. Hamill's "strictness of speech," as applicable to "our Episcopacy," and see how it will work. It is claimed that there are nearly a million and a half of members in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. (It is only, however, according to the latest statistics that we have seen, about one million three hundred thousand.) In the "Church Property Case," it was argued by the counsel that "the ministers were THE CHURCH," and decided by the Court, that these ministers, the bishops and travelling preachers, when assembled in Conference, according to the rules and usages of the Church, represented themselves, and "had no constituents." Therefore, "in strictness of speech," the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, instead of having nearly a million and a half, have only a membership of between six and seven thousand! "O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!"

That "strictness of speech," Brother Hamill, is no mean scythe, to cut off so many heads at one stroke. Truly, is "our Episcopacy" a "terrible army with banners!"

"Where there is no legislature, and your own authorities tell us you have none, there can be no legislative representatives." Most truly spoken, Brother Hamill, and we thank you for the compliment, and if you will not esteem it arrogance in us, we will undertake to enlighten you a little now, and more hereafter, when this discussion closes, upon Baptist sentiments on this subject. We do most religiously believe that Jesus Christ and his Apostles and evangelists did all the legislation necessary for his Churches in all ages. We believe that the "creed" and "form of government" which they drafted, and which is known as the New Testament, is the product of infinite wisdom, and far preferable to the one adopted by sixty Methodist preachers in 1784. As Christ only can know what is pleasing to himself, we are afraid to "add to" or "take from" that document, a single "jot or tittle." If it had been written by uninspired men, like "our Book of Discipline," it might have needed "mending;" but, as it emanated from Him who "saw the end from the beginning," we feel incompetent to add anything to it by our "legislation." If we can understand and apply its teachings to the objects intended, it is all that we aspire to. The lustre of the sun at mid-day would not likely be much increased by the addition of a few flickering tapers.

We confess Brother Hamill is leading us into some light upon the sacramental communion question. He informs us that he would not hesitate to administer the communion to persons baptized in any way (and so we

say, provided they have been baptized); and that Roman Catholic baptism is just as current as any other (a pretty long stride toward Rome, we think); and still further—if *they have not been baptized at all*, and give evidence of a desire to flee the wrath to come, &c., he is ready to commune with them. We say Brother Hamill is enlightening us—First: we begin now to understand the import of a phrase quite common among his brethren. It is very usual for them to characterize their denomination as “a branch of THE CHURCH.” Methodism was established by a “presbyter” of the Church of England. The English Church established by a Catholic King, Henry VIII. So that the English Episcopal Church becomes the connecting link between “the branch” and the original “stock.” Our brother’s Roman Catholic proclivities are quite significant. Traces of the family likeness are preserved with singular faithfulness and tenacity even to the third generation. But, secondly: it matters not whether the applicant for communion has ever been baptized in any way, or by anybody; our brother will not refuse the communion to him on that account! Well, “a decent respect for the opinions of mankind” has always induced writers on religious subjects to give one of two reasons at least for every item of faith and practice which they may adopt. Either, first, it is taught in the Scriptures, or, secondly, it is taught in the “Fathers.” That is, it is either scriptural or traditional. True, there is a wide difference between the two; but as already intimated, it is common even among Catholics to allege one or the other of these. But our brother does neither. Now, we say, if there is a single precept or example in all God’s word to autho-

rize the administration of the Lord's Supper to an unbaptized person; it was in his power to have produced it. But this he has not pretended to do. And as to the other, to wit: the teachings of the "Fathers," we will quote for our brother's special edification, the declaration of Dr. WALL: "No Church ever gave the communion to any persons before they were baptized. Among all the absurdities that were ever held, none ever maintained that any person should partake of the communion before they were baptized." Hist. Inf. Bap., part ii. ch. 9. Were it necessary, we could make similar quotations from Justin Martyr, Jerome, Austin, Bede, &c., among the ancient fathers; and from Drs. Manton, Doddridge, Dwight, &c., among modern divines.

Will Brother Hamill answer us the following plain questions, without any circumlocution?

First: Does the Discipline authorize him to administer the communion to any person who is guilty of that for which he would be excluded from the Methodist Episcopal Church?

Second; Would a man be excluded from that Church for persistently inveighing against its doctrines and discipline? And

Thirdly: If such offensive person should happen to be a Presbyterian or a Baptist, would the offence be less on that account?

If our brother had lived contemporaneous with Paul, he might have saved that Apostle a deal of trouble. He might have said to him: "Why, Paul, why don't you frame your ecclesiastical government after the model of 'our Episcopacy!' Why put yourself to the trouble of writing to the various Churches, entreating them to ar-

rest the tide of 'anarchy and confusion, inaccurately styled . . . Church government?' Just accept our panacea for all these evils—our 'system of surpassing energy' will soon quell all these 'disorders' which give you so much pain! Let them know that 'the will' of their pastors and teachers 'is omnipotent in the premises;' that *they* are not 'constituents;' that 'not a modicum of power' has ever been committed to them. Do this, Paul, and, my word for it, the Churches will no more be troubled with 'anarchy and confusion!' " "True," Paul might have replied, "we have already exhorted the Churches to 'Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and to be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage;'" and with what face can we now recall that exhortation. No! We have no such custom; neither the Churches of God."

Then, too, we have "charged the bishops with duplicity," &c. We have quoted what Mr. Wesley *said*, and what the bishops and travelling preachers *did*, and left the reader to draw his own inference. One party says that Mr. Wesley "preferred the *Episcopal* mode of Church government to any other, and that he ordained Thomas Coke, LL.D. to the *Episcopal* office," &c. The other party (Mr. Wesley) says, he "had rather be called a *knave*, a *fool*, a *rascal*, or a *scoundrel*, than to be called a *bishop*!" We have put these two statements together; and if "duplicity" is the result, we are not answerable.

In Baptist Churches, men enter the ministry by the joint co-operation of the Church and its eldership; so that Brother Mercer's opinions are just those which are entertained by all his Baptist brethren.

We have not "abandoned our position on the Church Property question" yet, Brother Hamill, as you will have seen in the first part of this article. As to the publication of a "deed" of some Methodist Church, that were a work of supererogation, since we have the decision of the United States Circuit Court upon the "Property Question." If the right to the "Church property" does not vest in the bishops and travelling preachers, how could they have transferred "all the churches, colleges, cemeteries," &c., &c., South, to the Southern division of that Church? How could they have divided the "Book Fund?" *The laws of the country have settled that question.*

But our insinuation in reference to Bishops McKendree and Bascom "was utterly unworthy of" us! Let us see. *Before* they were elevated to the Bishop's chair, they were loud in their denunciations of this "system of surpassing energy." McKendree went so far as to withdraw from the Conference, on account of the despotic sway of its Bishops. Bascom declared that its rulers were "*de facto, religious tyrants*, because they assumed and exercised rights that do not and can not in the nature of things belong to them." *Rights, &c., Art. 17.* *After* the mitre was placed upon their heads, *all these complaints were hushed.* That silence was ominous of something. They were but men—were not beyond the power of temptation. If they had retracted their former positions *and gained nothing by it*, then our brother might with some propriety say that "insinuation was unworthy of us," and that we "could not credit it" ourselves. If, for example, A and B were to be heard in the streets of our town, denouncing one of the political parties of the country as being *de facto*, political "tyrants,"

&c.; and soon afterwards were suddenly to become silent, and be promoted to some high position of honor and profit by that same party, it would look a little *suspicious*; and people would talk, and they would likely express what they believed. The *facts* are undeniable; the inference is not unreasonable.*

Moreover, we "have misapprehended Methodism"—have "created a man of straw," and battled him "valiantly," &c. Perhaps so. A certain Methodist clergyman, not a thousand miles from Tuskegee, recently said in the presence of a number of friends, that neither we nor Brother Hamill understood Episcopal Methodism! In what impenetrable mystery must "our Episcopacy" be enshrouded, that it cannot be understood by either friend or foe! But however this may be, "our man of straw" is lifting "a long, *loud*, general" note of maddened fury, through its "*Advocates*," which means something.

For the extent to which Methodism admits "lay delegation and lay management," see first part of this article.

But we misapprehended Bishop Hamline's remarks in our last, because, forsooth, we quoted them "second-handed." Now, our brother ought to inform himself a little better before he makes grave assertions of this kind. We quoted Bishop Hamline, to prove the authority of the clergy, from a bishop down to a circuit rider. We quoted him to prove that the system of Methodist Episcopacy was one of CLERICAL ABSOLUTISM; that their will was "an end of all strife," or, as he expresses it,

* See Appendix E.

"omnipotent in the premises." And we maintain that the quotation was *apropos*, and rightly construed. We quoted, too, from a copy of the Minutes of that Conference, *in our possession*. If our brother will step into our office, and will believe his own eyes, we think we can prove to him that we have no occasion to use "second-handed quotations" from any source, upon any point involved in this discussion. Does he suppose that we have ever doubted the power of the General Conference to depose or expel a bishop, in the face of the fact that Bishop Andrew *was deposed for being a slave holder*?

We "blundered" forsooth, in quoting from Bishop Hamline's speech! Did we not quote him accurately? Did we not quote all that referred to the immediate point we were discussing—to wit: the power of the bishop, elder, and circuit rider? Was it expected that we should transfer the entire speech into our columns? The charge of "garbling" is too puerile to be seriously answered.

In saying that "the word of a bishop was the end of all strife," we said nothing stronger than that "his will is omnipotent in the premises." But we deem it due to all parties to state that a bishop as such cannot reinstate an expelled member. The Quarterly Conference and the Annual and General Conference can. The principle is the same, however. It is this—that the clergy of the Methodist Episcopal Church can reinstate an excluded member or preacher over the head of the very Church from which he was expelled. The power that does this, is "our Episcopacy."

But we must close. in our next article we propose presenting "A striking" *contrast* "between the govern-

ment of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the government of the United States." With the avowed intention of presenting the *harmony* of Episcopacy and Republicanism, our brother fills up most of his article in berating the Baptists for their anarchy. What a philippic could our brother write against the Apostolic Churches! Taking Paul's declarations in regard to the incestuous person, I Cor. v. 1, or his account of "brothers going to law with brother," as "our Episcopacy" recently did; or James' question, "Whence come wars and fightings among you?" &c., how eloquently could he discourse of the "anarchy and confusion" of these Churches? Having gleaned from various sources some half a dozen cases of "disorders and strifes," among the "ten thousand" Baptist Churches in the United States, he gravely alleges, that these are to establish the *general principle*, that "anarchy" is rife *throughout the whole denomination!* "What lucid logic!" It is a work, too, "not congenial with his spirit." (1) Very well: When a man sets out to do one thing, and *does another*, it creates a *suspicion* that it is not very uncongenial. By the way, it is not a little amusing to hear our brother talk about "*rulers* among us," (the Baptists,) after demonstrating to his own satisfaction the "anarchy and confusion" of Baptist Churches. We had supposed that "anarchy and confusion" reigned where there were no "*rulers*." And does he really suppose that those who adopt the New Testament "as their only *rule* of faith and practice," really have "no Church government?" Baptists, like other "even good but fallible men," may err in the application of the principles of the inspired volume in certain cases, but to say that those who adopt it as the

only standard of appeal in all cases both of doctrine and discipline, have no government, is just saying, that Christ and his inspired Apostles were either incompetent or indifferent to the task of furnishing rules to govern the very bodies which they themselves organized. Where are the "symbols of faith, called creeds," which were "points of union among Christians" in the Apostolic age? Are they the new Testament? If so, *had they no "Church government?"* Or if they had, how comes it that those who *have the same constitution which they had*, have "what is inaccurately styled . . . Church government?" To such absurdities are "even good but fallible men" driven, who, forsaking the inspired rule, "hew out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." However, for his decided proclivity to "look upon the Christian enterprize, and sweet piety of many of our members," we are greatly obliged. And we assure him that similar characteristics among our Methodist brethren ever have, and ever will, we trust, awaken our kindest Christian regards, their Episcopacy to the contrary notwithstanding.

August 16th, 1855.

We accept our brother's explanation of the charge of "falsehood." The point of our complaint was in reference to the *facts* we had stated, not the *arguments* we had used.

We have waited several weeks on Brother Hamill, and received nothing more from him; and as the Associations and Fall Meetings are at hand, and as we expect to attend a number of them, we desire to close the discussion as early as possible. Without any further delay, therefore, we publish the following as our last article:

THE CONTRAST.

The contrast between Methodist Episcopacy and our civil governments, State and National, in seventeen distinct and fundamental points; The Methodist Episcopal Church the only denomination of Protestants in the United States, from whose ecclesiastical bodies all laymen are excluded by constitutional law; Not a fact contested which has been alleged in the discussion; The "Democratic element" in Episcopal Methodism, if it exists at all, must exist notwithstanding all these facts; synopsis and application of the argument; Conclusion.

Letter to Messrs. David Clopton, John B. Bilbro, and Robert L. Mayes.

"Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you."—JESUS CHRIST.

"Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the form of kings, to govern him? Let history answer this question."—THOMAS JEFFERSON, the Apostle of American Republicanism.

"As long as I live, THE PEOPLE shall have no share in choosing either stewards or leaders among the Methodists. We have not, nor ever had, any such custom. We are no Republicans, and never intend to be."—JOHN WESLEY, the Apostle of American Methodism.

We come now to the *interesting* task of tracing the *contrast* between our Republican institutions and Me-

thodist Episcopacy. Brother Hamill has given us the "striking analogy"—we propose presenting the opposite side. And let us again begin at the beginning.

First: The Constitution of the United States, and the Constitutions of each State of the confederacy, were formed by representatives chosen by THE PEOPLE in their sovereign capacity. The Constitution, or Book of "Discipline and Doctrines" of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed by sixty clergymen, appointed and summoned to their work by two Englishmen, Asbury and Coke. There was not a single layman, or a layman's representative, in the Conference of 1784, that drafted it. "*They admitted no constituency.*" "*They were absolutely an aristocracy.*"*

Secondly. The Constitution of the United States, and of each State, when drafted by their several Conventions of representatives from the people, were, by special ordinances, submitted back directly to THE PEOPLE for their ratification. The Constitution of Methodist Episcopacy was adopted and *forced* upon their (we wish we could say "*constituency*," but by the decision of the United States Circuit Court, "they have no constituency,") membership without even the form of a *voluntary recognition* of such power as was assumed by said Conference. No layman was ever asked to cast his suffrages by way of adopting that document.

Thirdly. Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, and of the several States, before they are considered binding, are submitted to their respective constitutions for their ratification: Amendments to the

* Ch. Prop. Case, page 331.

Constitution of Methodist Episcopacy, though more or less of them are made at every General Conference, we believe, are foisted upon the Churches, *volens volens*, by the mere *prerogative* of this body. In this, also, "*they admit no constituency—they have no constituency.*"*

Fourthly. The President and Vice President of the United States, and the Governor of each State, the highest officers recognized by the General and State governments, are chosen directly by THE PEOPLE every two, three and four years, thereby securing a frequent reckoning with these officers, and preventing any abuse of the power thus delegated to them: The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church are chosen for life, or during good behaviour, *by the clergy* who compose the General Conference, and who, when assembled, "*represent themselves, and have no constituents.*" They are "responsible only to their own consciences" for the manner in which they exercise their "unlimited ecclesiastical and temporal power."

Fifthly. The Congress of the United States, and the Legislatures of the several States, are composed of delegates elected by the suffrages of the several States, or by the people of the several States, and hold their offices one, two, three, and six years, and are, therefore, responsible directly to the people for their official conduct: The Annual and Quadrennial Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church are composed, *ex officio*, "of the bishops and travelling preachers," and *their* representatives. No layman of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever cast a single ballot for a representative to either a State or a General Conference.

* Appendix to Prop. Case, p. 11.

Sixthly. In our civil institutions, the *basis* of representation is the *entire population* of the United States, and of each respective State, except in the Senate of the United States, in which, for wise purposes, the *sovereignty* of each State is represented: In the Methodist Episcopal Church, the *basis* of representation is the *travelling clergy* in the bounds of each State.

Seventhly. The Congress of the United States, and the Legislature of each respective State, admit and represent a constituency, to whom they are responsible for their acts and doings: But the bishops and travelling preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church "comprise the embodiment of its power, *ecclesiastical and temporal*; and when assembled in General Conference, according to the usage and discipline of the Church, *represent themselves* AND HAVE NO CONSTITUENTS." So affirms Judge NELSON, in *Property case*.

Eighthly. Our civil Constitutions recognize "checks and balances"—tribunals to "correct errors and rectify wrongs"—thus affording relief to the injured and oppressed sufferer: In the Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "the will" of the circuit rider, or elder, or bishop, in removing an officer, "is omnipotent in the premises"—if an incumbent "is unjustly removed, *he must submit*"—since "there is no tribunal to cure the error or rectify the wrong." So affirms ex-bishop Hamline.

Ninthly. In our State and National governments, the people possess and exercise the right, directly or indirectly, to choose every officer, Legislative, Executive, and Judicial, to enact, expound, and administer law, from the President of the United States down to the most humble functionary recognized in our civil polity:

In the system of Methodist Episcopacy, the bishops and travelling preachers appoint every officer from a bishop down to a class-leader, "being responsible only to their own consciences" for the manner in which this authority is exercised. Their "will is omnipotent in the premises."

Tenthly. The right of petition for redress of grievances, is clearly recognized by the Constitution of the United States, and of each State. But when such a right is attempted to be exercised by the local preachers and private members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the least privilege which any form of government can recognize, the bishops of that Church answer: "*Pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges.*"*

Eleventhly. The government of the United States, and of each State, is a government of the people and their chosen representatives—a Democratic Republic: The Methodist Episcopal Church, "as regards its government," says the Hon. R. Johnson, in his speech in the "Church Property Case," *has been absolutely, since the days of Wesley, AN ARISTOCRACY!* Laymen have had, and now have, no voice in it." "If there is a layman within the sound of my voice," continues Mr. Johnson, "*HE KNOWS HE HAS NO VOICE NOW.*" Property Case, p. 331.

Twelfthly. Congress and our State legislatures, are bodies of limited powers; they have no authority whatever to change or modify our present forms of civil government: The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, is "the source and fountain of all its

* Circular of Gen. Con. of 1824.

temporal power," says Judge Nelson; nay, it "comprises the embodiment of its power, *ecclesiastical and temporal*." It is "a body unlimited in its authority to *create*," says Mr. Johnson, and "equally unlimited in the authority to *destroy*; responsible only to their consciences for the manner in which either authority is exercised." "If that body had chosen to become *SOCINIAN*," says Mr. Lord, one of the counsel for the claimants—"if it had chosen to adopt the *PRESBYTERIAN* or *BAPTIST* forms, *either of government or doctrine, it was in its power to do it; THERE WAS NO LIMIT*. They represented the Church; they were *THE CHURCH*. . . . The laity *were not known* in the governing body. Matters of doctrine, discipline, and everything, were in the governing body. If that was so up to 1808, what was that body after that period? *It was the same General Conference*." *Property case*, p. 163.

Thirteenthly. The first paragraph of the Constitution of the United States, alleges that "We, *THE PEOPLE* of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." The first section of the "Book of Discipline" alleges that, as Mr. Wesley "preferred the Episcopal mode of Church government to any other, he solemnly set apart, by the imposition of hands and prayer . . . Thomas Coke, LL.D. . . . a presbyter of the Church of England, for the Episcopal office; and having delivered to him letters of Episcopal orders, commissioned and directed him to set apart Francis Asbury, . . .

for the same episcopal office." That is, the people of the United States established their form of government: ONE MAN, John Wesley, according to the *Discipline*, authorized the establishment of the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The truth of this statement in regard to Mr. Wesley's ordaining Dr. Coke "to the *Episcopal* office," we have already examined, and, as we think, *proved* it to be *entirely inexact*; but as the governmental economy of that Church is to be ascertained by the *Discipline*, it is right and proper that we should refer to all its statements in this connection, as if they were true.

Fourteenthly. In the government of the United States, and of each separate State, the legislative, executive, and judicial departments of government, are placed in the hands of three distinct classes of officers, each operating as a check upon the others. Thus, the President of the United States, and the governor of each State, being elected by the people, and therefore representing their sovereignty, possess the *veto* power to check hasty or unconstitutional legislation. And Congress and State legislatures possess the power of passing a law by a two-third vote, notwithstanding the veto of the chief executive, thus imposing a salutary check upon this prerogative. And the judiciary, being the exponent of the constitutionality of all laws, becomes another check upon the legislative department. But in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the legislative, executive, and judicial departments of government are all in the same hands. And this body of men are not the representatives of the people, but, as Judge Nelson declares, "when assembled in Conference, *represent themselves*, and

have no constituents." "Where such a body of men," says the late Bishop Bascom, "first make the laws, then execute them, and, finally, are the sole judges of their own acts *there is no liberty*; THE PEOPLE ARE VIRTUALLY ENSLAVED, and liable to be ruined at any time." *Rights, &c. Art. 6.* In a word; all power, legislative, executive, and judicial, known in the governmental economy of that Church, is lodged in the hands of its clergy." "Not a modicum of power," says Mr. Johnson, "was left elsewhere."

Fifteenthly. The great fundamental principle which lies at the basis of our civil governments, State and National, is, THAT THEY ARE REPRESENTATIVE. In the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1824 and 1828, an effort was made by numerous petitioners, local preachers and private members, to modify their form of government, so as to make it REPRESENTATIVE, and the memorialists were sternly rebuked by the bishops of that Church, in the very language of despotism itself: "*Pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges!*" The only efforts which have ever been made to incorporate into its economy the essential element of Republicanism, have been and are now denounced as *schismatical*, and its promoters suspended and expelled from the ministry and Church; and yet there is a most striking analogy between Methodist Episcopacy and our Republican form of government!! Nay, further, if a man doubts its Republicanism, he is to be denounced as a "bigot," a "demagogue," and sundry other amiable epithets must be applied to him by the champions of this hierarchy! Now, we do solemnly protest, that a man's Christian charity ought not to be measured by the

dimensions of his throat to swallow "our Episcopacy!" We do protest that it is possible for a man to base his love for his fellow Christians upon some other "points of union" besides this "system of surpassing energy"—that he may love their virtues without endorsing their errors—and that personal piety may be one thing, and clerical absolutism may be a different thing.

Sixteenthly. Our civil Constitutions, State and National, recognize the principle, "*That all power is inherent in the people:*" In the Methodist economy, *all power is inherent in the clergy.* "If they had chosen to become Socinian . . . they could have done so. There was no limit," said Mr. Lord. Property Case, p. 163.

Seventeenthly. In our civil government, the property is held by the people, and even the small pittance which is used for State and National purposes, is subject to the direction of their representatives: In the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Church property is held and disposed of by the clergy. Even the trustees who hold the property, are to be appointed by the "preacher in charge, or the presiding elder of the district, all of whom are to be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Discipline, last edition, p. 218. The appointment of these trustees is the amount of lay "representation and lay management" of which our brother so frequently boasts. This "lay representation and lay management" amounts to about as much as the "representation and management" of ordinary clerks in a mercantile establishment. They can only execute the orders of the bishops and clergy of the General or State Conferences. This every reader can see by turning to the Discipline, pp. 209, 214, and pp. 256, 257.

We could trace this *contrast* much further; but the foregoing points are deemed sufficient for our present purpose. We will only add, in closing this part of the subject, THAT THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, IS THE ONLY DENOMINATION OF PROTESTANTS ON THIS CONTINENT, FROM WHOSE ECCLESIASTICAL COUNSELS ALL LAYMEN ARE EXCLUDED BY CONSTITUTIONAL LAW. If a line were drawn upon the subject of Church government between all professing Christians in this country, on one side of it would be arrayed the Methodist Episcopal and the Roman Catholic communions—on the other all other Protestant denominations. To what extent Methodists are charmed with their company, and how long they will keep it, the future must show. We have not placed Methodism there. This was the work of its first apostles. We have only hung the lamp of truth over the *arcana* of the system, and are not responsible for its revelations. Other hands must apply the corrective.

THE READER WILL OBSERVE, THAT NOT ONE FACT THAT WE HAVE ALLEGED IN CONNECTION WITH THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF EPISCOPAL METHODISM IN THIS COUNTRY, HAS EVER BEEN CONTESTED BY BROTHER HAMILL. He has attempted to show that some of our deductions were illogical and uncharitable. The facts he has not pretended to meet. He has occupied the most of his time and space in deploring in quite pathetic terms, the "Munster insurrection," "close communion," and "Baptist anarchy." Of course, if he thus permit "judgment to go by default," if, having of his own free will taken issue with us upon a plain, practical question, he sees proper to leave us to discuss that question, and busies himself with other is-

sues which have no more to do with the one he set out to discuss than the Eastern war has to do with the state of the weather, it is not our concern. It only shows the utter impossibility of harmonizing Methodist Episcopacy with the genius of our free institutions. And now, if the "Democratic element" really does exist in the governmental economy of Methodism, *it must exist in that system, notwithstanding all these facts.* That is to say, it must exist in a system of government, the basis of whose representation in its ecclesiastical councils is, not the numerical strength of the membership, but the travelling clergy; whose constitution was adopted wholly by the ministry, without so much as submitting it to its membership; whose rulers, when assembled in General Conference, according to the usage and discipline of the Church, represent themselves, and "have no constituents;" which is "absolutely an aristocracy;" whose functionaries can remove all inferior officers without the forms of trial, the removed party having no alternative but submission, there being "no tribunal to cure the error or rectify the wrong;" whose bishops, in answer to respectful petitions, to make the system *Republican*, that is, *representative*, use the very language of despotism itself—"Pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges"—whose ecclesiastical councils are "unlimited in the authority to create, and equally unlimited in the authority to destroy; responsible only to their own consciences for the manner in which either is exercised;" whose legislators possess the power, according to Mr. Lord, to change the whole Methodist denomination into a "SOCINIAN" body; whose government, according to the Discipline, originated with

one man, Mr. Wesley; whose legislative, executive, and judicial powers are vested in the same men, there not being "a *modicum* of power left elsewhere;" who, in direct contravention of that vital principle which lies at the basis of our government, "that all power is inherent in the people," place all "ecclesiastical power" in the hands of the travelling clergy; whose chief officers, the bishops, possess the power of sending six thousand ministers to any and every part of the country, from Maine to California, and from Florida to Oregon, *volens volens*, regardless, too, as to whether such arbitrary appointments shall comport with the wishes of those who are to support them; and finally, whose funds and property are under the supreme control of the same ecclesiastical bodies, composed entirely of the clergy; we say, the "Democratic element" must exist in this system, if it has any existence at all in it, notwithstanding all these facts! No, Brother Hamill, the system of Episcopal Methodism may, like some forms of government in Europe, be "a system of surpassing energy!" And to those who look upon "energy" as the "*sine qua non*" of government, it may be "worthy of all eulogy!" But, whatever other virtues "our Episcopacy" may possess, and we shall not undertake to say but what they are many, we do think that so far as "Democracy" and "Republicanism" are virtues, "*It is weighed in the balances and found wanting.*" What principle in the governmental economy of Methodism would have to be compromised, to change this government into an aristocracy, or even monarchy? Suppose our legislators, State and National, should take it upon themselves to form our civil government after the model of Episcopal

Methodism, is there one man in a million who would pretend to call it a "Democratic Republican government?" A system of government "which admits no constituents—which has no constituents—which is absolutely an aristocracy"—such a system a Democratic Republican government, forsooth! Why, the virgin form of the "goddess of American liberty," rising up out of that system, would be the greatest monstrosity that ever haunted the distorted fancy of "De Quincey's opium eater!" He who can evolve Democracy from such a system of polity, would find no difficulty, we opine, in lifting the stone of Sisyphus from its depth profound, and rolling it to the top of the Dvāhalagiri mountain.

We have accomplished our task, with what success it becomes us not to say. We have not adduced a single fact but what has been sustained by evidence the most conclusive; nor have we used a single argument which was intended to have any more weight with the reader than it had on our own mind. TRUTH—NOT VICTORY, has been our aim. And as TRUTH is always consistent with itself; as it can, above all things else in the universe, afford to be magnanimous, we have freely and cheerfully opened our columns for the full and unreserved discussion of the governmental economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Controversy, conducted in a right spirit, is by far the most successful method of developing and establishing the truth, for the obvious reason—that the statements of the parties interested are each subjected to the most rigid scrutiny; and whatever survives such an ordeal, is recognized by the historian as reliable material for his work. Many of the important facts which are connected with the origin and history of Episcopal

Methodism in this country, never would be brought out before the public mind but for discussions of this kind. We disclaim all sympathy with that sickly cant among many professing Christians, which affirms that religious controversy is essentially and always an evil. And as we do not believe that Methodist Episcopacy has any higher claims upon implicit popular credulity than any other system of ecclesiastical polity of equal pretensions and age, we have not thought it sacrilege to discuss its claims to the confidence and support of American citizens. This we have done to the best of our ability. Sincerely wishing that the cause of truth and righteousness may be subserved by this discussion, we here lay down our pen.

LETTER TO MESSRS. DAVID CLOPTON, JOHN B. BILBRO, AND
ROBERT L. MAYES.

Respected Brethren:

As your names appeared on the original communication from your honored pastor, which sprung this discussion, you will excuse me for the liberty I take in addressing you a few words on its conclusion. On reading that communication, I could not regard it in any other light than as a formal demand that I should either repudiate the article from the *Western Watchman*, or defend it. It is due to myself to state, that the article was selected and published in the paper by my late worthy associate, several days before I saw it. Indeed, up to the time of the receipt of your communication, I had

not read it, being absent from home in attendance upon the Georgia Baptist Convention. Immediately, therefore, after reading the article, I did repudiate that portion of it which I deemed justly offensive to your denomination. But as I could not extend this reprehension to that portion of it which referred to the governmental economy of your Church, as an isolated topic of discussion, I chose the latter alternative—I choose to defend it. I am sure, *you*, brethren, will not blame me for using such facts in this controversy as your own history has furnished to my hand. True, I have been abused, misrepresented, and slandered by some members of your Church, in the public prints, and otherwise, for daring to discuss this subject. But I beg to assure you, that I do not hold you, nor the large, intelligent, and pious denomination of Christians to which you belong, responsible for this unkind treatment. Indeed, your worthy pastor has expressed time and again, his decided disapprobation of such conduct. And it affords me pleasure thus publicly to bear testimony to the excellent spirit which has marked his course through this discussion. I shall ever cherish for him the kindest and best of Christian feelings. I trust I have not been wanting in reciprocal courtesy.

It would be indelicate in me to appeal to you to decide how far I have succeeded in maintaining the proposition upon which your pastor took issue with me. The result is before a much more unerring and august tribunal than either party immediately interested in the discussion—an enlightened and generous public opinion. With the award of that tribunal, it would be madness in me not to acquiesce.

LETTER VI.

THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN; A VALUABLE AUXILIARY OF THE GOSPEL; AND A HOLY CHARITY; HON. RUFUS CHOATE'S VIEW OF METHODISM; THE CONTRAST REVIEWED.

Mr. Lord's history of the Book Concern; Built up by the preachers, and therefore held in trust by them for two holy uses; Its charity like Job; Its control by the ministry praiseworthy; The mutilated resolution; The Court decrees that the General Conference has no proprietary interest in the Preaching Houses; Lay management of the largest revenue of the Church.

PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH PROPERTY CASE.

Do civil lawyers understand Church polity better than judicious ministers? Legal opinions versus Church standard; Louisville Conventions; Dr. Elliott and Hon. Rufus Choate against a legal fiction; The Church South did not recover its rights upon false principles; The case stated; Principles applicable to the Book Concern property, and inapplicable to Church polity; Pleadings of counsel; Consent of a majority in all departments of the Church to a division of the Book Concern Fund; Plan of separation contingent; Power ascribed to General Conference wholly unfounded; The ~~veto~~ power of an Annual Conference; ~~Protest~~ of laity in the case of a distinguished minister of the Georgia Conference; Lawyers' opinion of a Church in the Methodist sense;

Permit me to say, in conclusion, that I was unwilling to take the position I did in the opening of this controversy, without sustaining it by what I believed to be ample testimony drawn from the most authentic sources. This I could not do within a shorter compass than I have occupied. As I assumed the *onus probandi*, I was unwilling to stop short of that measure and kind of testimony which I believed would sustain my allegation; and having reached that point, the discussion, so far as I am concerned, is closed. Wishing you grace, mercy, and peace, I am, brethren, without any abatement,

Your friend and brother in Christ,

SAM'L. HENDERSON,

September 6, 1855.



LETTER VI.

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THE CONTRAST.

The contrast twice dead; The Church legislates in minor matters only; Distinction between the province of human and divine legislation; How the discipline was formed; Conference laws like Acts of Legislatures; Discipline not amended; Duality of General Conference jurisdictions demanded by the people; Bishop's term of office like that of the supreme judges; Subject to a like impeachment; General Conference constituted like the United States Senate; Is one State nearly equal to thirteen in the Southern Baptist Convention? Bishop's power of removal less than the President's; Officers of Methodism chosen as directly from the people as civil officers; The right to petition as unbounded as in Congress; An absurdity exposed; Mr. Wesley's

advice; Bishops have no legislative powers; Restrictions upon Annual and General Conferences; What would dethrone Christ as King in Zion; The only right of the Clergy in Church buildings; The contrast and the analogy, both exist in their proper places; A pleasant close; The discussion useful; The pious will do good anywhere; Charity indispensable; The publication of the discussion without note or comment, proposed.

"It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh, but he awaketh, and behold, he is faint. So shall the multitude be, who fight against Mount Zion."—ISAIAH.

BROTHER HENDERSON:

Attention to the higher duties of the ministry, in connection with a revival in my own charge, and camp meeting labor abroad, with the conviction that my position has been fully established in this controversy: namely, that Methodism is Republicanism of the highest excellence, has delayed my answer to your article on the Book Concern Property Case, and the principles involved in its adjudication, so far as they bear upon the question under discussion.

An analysis of these principles, will give increased support to my position. A brief history of this case, is necessary to a correct understanding of them. It is furnished to my hand by Mr. Lord. He says: "When Methodism was organized as a separate Church, in addition to the means of instruction afforded by preaching, it was very obvious that a great want was to be supplied in the furnishing of religious literature to its people; and one of their preachers organized a system of publishing books in this country. It was originally established in Philadelphia. This preacher, whose name

was Cooper, lent a small sum of money to the object, and invested it in books. They were sold among the denomination; and out of the profits a small capital was gradually formed, which was employed in publishing books. This came to be a matter of some magnitude, and in 1836, it had been removed to New York, and become an extensive establishment. It was then destroyed by fire, and afterwards reinvigorated, and from that time to the present, it has gone on with great prosperity, so that it has accumulated a capital of about \$750,000. It was early provided that the preachers should see that their congregations were supplied with books.

"They were very faithful men; stimulated not by a love of gain, but by the higher purpose of religious devotion. Of course, a fund thus constructed, could not but become considerable. Your honors will have your attention called to the fact, that it was really the result of the devotion and services of the preachers. It was not like many charitable funds, a fund growing out of the donations of wealthy men, but it was in its main features, the earnings of this system. Its profits, after providing capital enough to carry on its business successfully, were devoted at an early period to one single purpose, in two or three branches. That purpose was, the making up of the deficiencies of travelling preachers and providing for the supernumerary, superannuated preachers, the wives and children of preachers, and the widows and orphans of deceased preachers. (Church Property Case, p. 1 and 2.) It was a charity which grew out of actual laborious, self-denying, beneficial services, just as much as any savings' bank or life in-

surance. (p. 152.) Every preacher was an agent in the diffusion of the literature of the Church; a wise, very wise plan—wise for the people, and wise for the government of the Church. But it was the act of the preachers; it was the labor of the preachers that made this the great Book Concern which it ever came to be. This was a business most strictly and directly connected with the ministry of this Church, calling not only for activity and labor on their part, but pecuniary accountability on the part of every preacher, in every Methodist circuit. (p. 154.) It was intended to create a fund for the first great object of enlightening this Methodist community as to religious truth; and that the second great object was, that when this institution should be carried out, the preachers themselves might have some little stimulus for activity, and that they should be entitled to look for an absolute support from this fund for the wants of old age, and the wants of their dependents, and the wants of their poor and suffering brethren. I ask, if there ever was a fund which provided so equitably and justly, a retiring pension for those men, who for a trifling salary, not enough to pay for a fashionable dinner, served year after year in the wilderness, and spent their best days in toil. (p. 155.) It was a retiring pension, or savings' bank for the supernumerary and worn out preachers, and their widows and orphans." (p. 157.)

The foregoing extracts from Mr. Lord's speech, show us both the ground and the kind of right to property in the Book Concern, held by the travelling preachers of the Methodist Church. First: That the right to it grew out of the fact, that it was mainly the product of their

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own earnings, from a small capital created by themselves, and by themselves managed under all the pecuniary liabilities to which business of every sort is subject. And secondly: that this Book Concern property was held by them in trust for two distinct and specified purposes, and cannot be alienated by them for any other uses whatever; no, not even for any other religious enterprises. These objects are, first, the diffusion of religious knowledge, and then the relief of indigent and distressed preachers, and the widows and orphans of deceased preachers. The first-named of these objects, all must pronounce a laudable Christian enterprise, eminently worthy of a band of gospel ministers, and the second, a holy charity, which, like Job, "Becomes eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and a father to the poor, and brings the blessing of him who was ready to perish upon those who manage it; and causeth the widow's heart to sing for joy." Of this latter object of the Book Concern, Mr. Lord says: "Now, until we get to the beneficiaries, we find no person having anything but a mere administrative right—a mere agency, and, as to selection, no discretion." (p. 149.) Mr. Wood says, (p. 319) "The Methodist Church are not the beneficiaries, they are the managers of this charity, for the sake of others—they have no right to apply it to any other interest in the Church, or at least so much of it as may be required to fulfill the end designed, to supply the beneficiaries." Said I not true, then, that property thus created, and held for such holy uses, is a valuable auxiliary of the gospel, and a holy charity? Can any rational man pronounce such an institution, contemplating such holy ends, anti-Republican!!! Does the fact that

the capital was created by preachers, that its increase was the profit of their labors, and that this holy charity is administered by preachers to their suffering brethren, their widows and orphans, constitute it anti-Republican? No, brother Henderson, it is not only not anti-Republican, but it merits more praise than to coldly affirm it is in harmony with Republicanism. The lawyers who called it a wise institution, might have added, it was one of the holiest and most benevolent institutions in the land. Suppose yourself and a score of Baptist preachers began a noble enterprise of this kind, furnished a small capital for the purpose, assumed the responsibilities, and devoted the profits of your labors to such blessed uses; what would you, what could you think of the soundness of judgment of that man, who should denounce this wise design as anti-Republican? Would you not say, "Friend, you are mistaken; some strange prejudice has blinded your mind, or you would commend and not censure our noble object; if we as ministers, choose to devote a portion of our means and of our labor to the work of offering you a holy literature, and give a portion of our earnings to relieve the disabled veterans of the cross, who have ministered unto us in holy things, whose right have we infringed, that you should consider us as enemies of our land? We have wronged no man; we have defrauded no man. If you, as laymen, are emulous of imitating our holy example, what hindereth you? Go, write, publish, and circulate a holy literature, and expend your profits upon whatever noble objects of charity you see proper, and 'we do rejoice therein, yea, and will rejoice.'" Who would deny the justice of this rebuke? None; not one.

see the form of our Church deeds, and let prejudice no more utter so groundless a charge.

I again repeat, that in all things in which the laity are equally concerned with the ministry, Methodism has lay delegation, and lay management, to the fullest extent, for instance, Missionary, Tract, Education, Sunday School, and other Societies, and in Conference Financial Boards. And that these are by no means inferior interests of the Church, you will admit, when I repeat that the Missionary Society, which has more lay than clerical managers, disburses annually by far the largest revenue of our Church, about \$160,000. As for our College operations, you have an example of them here in Tuskegee, immediately under your eye. Who, I ask, are the trustees of our Tuskegee Female College? Are they preachers? Who are now organizing the Faculty? Are they preachers? No, you know them, and have every opportunity to see to what extent laymen control these interests. But you inquire, are not the laity equally interested with the preachers in the Book Concern? I answer, by no means; the preachers, not the laity, furnished mainly the capital, made the earnings by their labor, and disburse the profits, not to indigent laymen, but to distressed preachers. Who, then, should control it? Plainly, those who alone would suffer from its mismanagement.

PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH PROPERTY CASE.

The foregoing *expose* of the character of the property held by the Methodist Church, will prepare us for an easy understanding of the principles involved in the Church Property Case, in which the right of the South-

ern Church to a due proportion of the Book Concern fund, was contested by the Church, North, under the influence of abolition sentiment. I here premise that the opinions of legal gentlemen, such as the learned counsel engaged in the Church suit, upon questions such as the following: What are the rights of property which the courts of our country will recognize? are worthy of the highest respect. But upon questions of Church polity, whether in the Methodist, Baptist or Presbyterian Churches, those who are not connected with these Churches, however great their legal attainments, cannot possibly understand them as thoroughly, as judicious ministers of these Churches, who are familiar with the every day operations of their respective Church systems.

I have all along in this discussion supported my position from acknowledged Church standards, and not from the mere opinions of those unconnected with either of our Churches. You had the standards of our Church before you, in the very book whence you extracted these legal opinions. When you sought to condemn us, you should have attempted it from those standards. Your failure to do this, and your resort to the mere opinions of only a portion of the counsel engaged in the case—opinions which had been, in advance, solemnly protested against by no less an authority than the Louisville Convention of the Church, South, which protest was actually in evidence before the Court—and opinions too, which were exactly opposite to the opinions of the most distinguished lawyer employed in the case, and, indeed, the most distinguished lawyer in the United States, the Hon. Rufus Choate, of Boston—and opinions, which have also drawn forth from Dr. Elliott, and others, of the

Church, North, bitter condemnation; though you seem to have strangely mistaken us, in supposing that either the Northern or Southern Churches silently assented to these opinions—this resort, I say, to proof of this description, is *prima facie* evidence of the weakness of your cause, and of the groundlessness of your allegations.

It may be asked, then, did the Church, South, recover its property upon false principles? I answer, no. There were principles set forth in the debate, which were false in their application to all other matters of Church polity, but true in their application to the Book Concern Fund. With reference to this fund, the entire travelling ministry of the United States had no constituency—they were the only body in the Church, who had any voice at all in the disposing of this fund—they were the only department of the Church which had any control over it, and simply because it was of their own creation: they were the Church, in the governmental sense of the term, so far as this fund was concerned, but no further. The application of these principles, to other matters of Church polity, was a false statement of our Church government, but their application to this fund was just, and, therefore, the Court righteously adjudged us our rights in the case.

The case stood thus: The Book Concern property was held by the entire body of travelling ministry, for specified uses. Secondly: The Annual Conferences delegated to the General Conference their entire control over this fund, placing upon them but a single restriction, which restriction was, that they should carry out the design of the founders of this charity: namely, that they should

not appropriate the produce of this fund to any other purpose than for the benefit of the beneficiaries therein described; and so the General Conference became the manager of this fund, and the Annual Conferences disbursed the proceeds to the beneficiaries thereof. Thirdly: The General Conference, thus clothed with full powers, could have divided, without any separation of the Church, this fund into two or twenty parts, provided that the intention of this restrictive article was secured, that the proceeds were disbursed to the proper beneficiaries. Fourthly: The division of this fund with the Church, South, secured the proceeds of it to the very same beneficiaries, and no others, intended in the restrictive article; and, therefore, the General Conference had the power to make this division; and in view of the necessity for separate ecclesiastical jurisdictions, growing out of the diverse views of the two sections of the Church upon the slavery question, wisdom dictated the propriety of this division of the fund. And, lastly: The majority of Annual Conferences of the United States—the only primary bodies having any claim over this fund—approved of this division; and though the two-thirds majority required to change the restrictive article, was not obtained; yet in consideration of the fact that the design of this article was as effectually secured after the division of the funds with the Church, South, as before, it was decided to be no bar to this division of the property. Therefore, the will of the majority of the General Conference of 1844, and the will of the majority of Annual Conferences which approved of the measure thereafter, should be executed.

The plea set up in bar of this measure was, that the beneficiaries to whom the Southern Conferences would distribute these proceeds, did not answer the description of such in the discipline—they were not members of the Methodist Episcopal Church—they and their Conferences were a secession from the Methodist Church. It was replied that, in the Church, South, “there was no deviation in morals or doctrines, in rites, ceremonies, or usages—that there is no sort of pretence of any deviation in doctrine, nor anything in morals, in practice, or in Methodist usages, or that we are heterodox in the shade of a hair.” In everything we are alike; and, therefore, if the fund were divided with the Southern Church, it would not promote doctrines contrary to those cherished by the creators of this charity. We have done nothing for which we should be stigmatized as a secession; we have only asked for a duality of jurisdictions, instead of an unity of jurisdiction of the General Conference; and we had weighty reasons for making this demand.

The preachers representing the Annual Conferences, and the people in the Northern section of the Church, declared it was the sentiment of the Northern people, that it would operate greatly to the prejudice of Methodism in that section, if a bishop connected with slavery were permitted to exercise Episcopal functions among them—and accordingly suspended a blameless bishop. Thereupon, the Southern preachers representing the Annual Conferences, and the people in the Southern section of the work, knowing the strong indignation which would inevitably be excited by an attempt to degrade a holy man from the office of bishop, on account

of his connection with slavery, asked that provision should be made for a separation, contingent upon the demand of the people of their section for such division. The preachers representing the Church, North, wisely conceded that contingent demand, and took all the preliminary steps necessary to consummate the separation; provided that the facts which were to be developed, proved that the Southern preachers had rightly interpreted public sentiment. They separated—the Southern preachers returned to their homes. Primary assemblies were called—as Mr. Fancher, counsel for the North, said: “The most excited meetings soon occurred in all parts of the South, and the most indignant resolutions were passed.” With one consent, they demanded an immediate separation from the Church, North. The contingency provided for by the General Conference was become a certainty. And to complete all the steps necessary to perfectly exonerate us from the charge of secession, the entire body of Annual Conferences took action directly upon the moneyed interests involved in the division, and thus indirectly upon the question of the division itself; and a majority of them voted that the Church, South, should have her just proportion of the funds of the Church.

Here, then, we have the General Conference consenting to the division, if the sentiment of the people demanded it—the majority of the Annual Conferences of the United States also consenting to it—the laity of the entire South demanding it—and the laity of the Church, North, the only remaining party in the case, being satisfied that their abolition sentiments had accomplished the suspension of Bishop Andrew, and the separation

not affecting their Church relations at all, did not, in their primary assemblies, raise any voice against this division, which they could have done had they seen proper; and therefore, it is only justice to say, that they also tacitly consented to this division. Thus we see the majority, in all the departments of the Church, consenting to a duality of jurisdictions; and though there was not two thirds majority of Conferences, wrongly supposed necessary to a division of the funds of the Church, yet there was a majority in favor of separate jurisdictions, and being one in all things else, we are not, therefore, a schism or secession, and so were righteously adjudged by the Court.

That these were the true principles upon which the rights of the South rested, and upon which the Court decided in favor of the South, though not presented in this form, is evident from the fact, that in all the pleadings of the counsel, there is a constant reference, not only to the action of the General Conference, but also to the action of the majority of the Annual Conferences, in favor of the plan of separation, and to the almost universal demand of the laity of the Southern Church for that separation. Some, however, of the counsel, and only some of them, in their zeal to repel the charge of schism from the Church, South, thought proper, contrary to the opinion of other counsel to take the position, that the General Conference had almost enough power to divide the Church independently of the action of other departments of the church. Nevertheless, fearful of the weakness of this position, they took good care to show that the entire laity of the South demanded the separation, and that a majority of the Annual Conferences sanctioned it.

Now, the idea that the provision of the General Conference for a division of the Church, would have been binding upon the Annual Conferences and the laity, if public sentiment among them had not demanded it, is plainly absurd; for, upon the very face of the articles of separation, as well as in the debates of that Conference, and in the protest of the South, the fact stands out prominently to view, that the plan of separation was to be executed only upon a given contingency; that is, the laity and ministry of the Southern Church should demand it. If this contingency did not become a fact, the plan of separation was to be void and of no effect. Moreover, the action thought necessary to consummate the division, was to be laid before all the Annual Conferences for their assent; and, as Mr. Fancher says: "*The Southern preachers were to feel the pulse of public sentiment,*" and act accordingly. Therefore, the assumption that the General Conference claimed and possessed the power to divide the Church, independently of the Annual Conferences and of the laity, was wholly gratuitous, and contrary to the facts in the case, and unnecessary for the support of the just claims of the South.

If the Annual Conferences had vetoed the action of the General Conference, it would have been a nullity; and if the laity, in their primary assemblies, had protested against it, that protest would have been of as much force, as it was in the case of a distinguished preacher of the Georgia Conference, who opposed the plan of separation, and was required to vacate his charge of the Columbus station; it would have made the plan null and void.

Nevertheless, I have already admitted that in so far as the control of the Book Concern Fund, which was the property in suit, was concerned, the preachers who created it had the sole control of it. They were, with respect to it, and to it only, the Church, in a governmental sense, and had no constituency in this matter; and in the management of this fund, the laity had no voice. But as the same lawyer says (p. 330,) and as our discipline teaches, "The Church, in a Methodistic sense, is the connexion of good and pious men, who make the Bible their creed, and hold fast to that only which is there expressly disclosed, or may be thereby, by clear reasoning, established." This is what your own witness declares to be the Methodistic sense of the term Church: the very sense of the term Church I am explaining in my analysis of Methodism. And I am sure, very sure, that I much prefer the Methodistic idea of a Church, to a legal fiction wholly groundless, in fact, and in theory. And in the Methodistic sense, I know no lawyer, nor any other reader of our discipline, could affirm that our itinerant preachers had no constituency, in the very face of the facts so plainly stated in our discipline, that none can be licensed to preach among us without the vote of the laity; and none can be received into the itinerancy without a vote of the laity, recommending the candidate to be received; so that every itinerant has been constituted such by two distinct acts of the laity. The affirmation that the itinerant preachers had no constituency, must therefore, have been made in some other than a Methodistic sense; and if made in any other than a Methodistic sense, it has nothing to

do with, and should have no place in, a just exposition of Methodism.

But Mr. Lord said, "If the General Conference had chosen to become Socinian, if it had chosen to have adopted the Presbyterian or Baptist forms, either of government or of doctrine, it was in its power to do it." Most assuredly they could, as individuals controlling their own action; any member or members of them, in our free country, could have adopted any of the systems specified; nay, more, he might with equal justice have said, *they could have become Mohammedans, or Budhists; and so could any member or members of your associations, or conventions, or of Presbyterian Synods, or assemblies.* The members of our General Conference could have done this, contrary to that restrictive article, which you forgot to mention, and which forbids the altering of our doctrines to the shade of a hair. Still, there is another *could* and another *would* too, behind all this matter—that is the Annual Conferences *could* have taken every one of these delegates on their return home, and have tried and expelled them, and they *would* most certainly have done it too. If Mr. Lord meant that the members of the General Conference could have changed so much as a hair's breadth our articles of faith, even if there had been no restrictive article forbidding it, and then escaped ecclesiastical penalties, he was most egregiously mistaken.

A little knowledge of the history of Methodism, would convince you, that no General Conference, either in the United States, or in England, has ever established or changed our doctrines by vote. We have always acted on the principle that, we should not add new doctrines

to, nor expunge old doctrines from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have thought there was something of temerity in the idea of voting, for instance, whether Christ were divine or not—whether he were the King of kings, and Lord of lords, or a mere worm of dust. We cannot with so facile a movement, bestow infinite crowns upon Christ, nor tear them from his brow, and therefore, do not consent that such doctrines shall be subject to majorities. We propound such truths as heaven's legislation, and whoever joins our Church, thereby declares his faith in them, not as man-made, but as heaven-revealed truths.

The excellent Mr. Benson says, "Well was it for both preachers and people, that all their doctrines, and the essential parts of their discipline, which taken together, may be termed the constitution of the Methodists were decided upon and recorded before *the existence of a Conference*. No member of the Methodist Conference however respectable for parts or piety, would be suffered in that assembly to make the truth of any doctrine of Methodism or essential part of its discipline, a subject of debate. (Mem. p. 121.) And for this sufficient reason, that God has not imposed upon us the duty of amending his own legislation."

The notion that the General Conference had no limit to its power but the six restrictive rules, had been solemnly protested against by the Louisville Convention, which organized upon the demand of the laity, the Church, South, in the following language: a protest drawn forth by the doctrine that a General Conference had no restriction upon its power to depose a blameless bishop. "Very few, indeed, of the more fundamental

and distinguishing elements of Methodism, deeply and imperishably imbedded in the affection and veneration of the Church, and vital to its very existence, are even alluded to in the restrictive articles. This theory assumes the self-refuted absurdity, that the General Conference is in fact the government of the Church, if not the Church itself. With no other constitution than these mere restrictions upon the powers of the General Conference, the government and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as a system of organizing laws and well-adjusted instrumentalities for the spread of the gospel, and the diffusion of piety, and whose living principles of energy have so long commanded the admiration of the world, would soon cease even to exist." (Prop. Case, p. 131.) "Such wild and revolutionary assumptions, so unlike the faith and discipline of Methodism, as we have been taught them, we are compelled to regard as fraught with ruin and mischief to the best interests of the Church." (p. 132.)

The Hon. Rufus Choate, of Boston, the most eminent lawyer employed in the case, states correctly the relative powers of the several departments of the Church. He says of what he styles "that old, grand, well compacted, and once beautiful community—the Methodist Episcopal Church: for the administration of local business it has local judicatories; for the conduct of its general affairs *proceeding upon the plan of our grand secular union*, it has a general body." (p. 264.) So Mr. Choate, it seems, thought there was a striking analogy between our Church and the Federal Government; and like sentiments were entertained by John C. Calhoun and Daniel Webster. Of the organization of American Methodism,

Mr. Choate justly says: "The true sovereign, then, I submit, the true sovereign, by which alone it can be destroyed, may be said to be the preachers in a mass, acting in obedience to the wishes of the people, in strong and general demand of the laity for a separate organization, through the advice of Mr. Wesley, and upon their own judgment of expediency and duty, and convened for the express purpose of doing that work. SO THAT IT WAS IN A REMARKABLE DEGREE ANALOGOUS TO THE CONVENTION WHICH CREATED THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION IN 1787. The true creator of the Church was the general and collective will of American Methodism, acting through the laity, and through the preachers. It was a great ecclesiastical Convention of the Methodists of America." (p. 268. "After this Church was created, it had, and it necessarily must have had, administrative bodies through which, in various spheres, to carry on its daily business. Such are the officers of the Church, such are the Annual Conferences, such are the Quarterly Conferences, and such is, or such, at least, was, in 1792, the General Conference. *These, all of them, are subordinate executive agencies of the principal, the constituent—the Church.*"

That Mr Choate was correct in his view of the part performed by the laity in the organization of Methodism, is proved beyond all question, by Mr. Wesley's letter, recommending the organization of the American Church, and by his letters of ordination delivered to Dr. Coke. He says: "*Some thousands of the inhabitants of these [United] States desire my advice.*" And hence he gave them his views of a scriptural Church. Again: In the

ordination letter, he says: "*Many of the people in the Southern provinces of North America desire to continue under my care,*" &c. (Bangs' Church History, p. 154.) Now, you will observe, that, at that time, there were less than fifteen thousand members, including blacks, and only eighty-three preachers; therefore, if any man can impeach the veracity of Mr. Wesley, and magnify eighty-three preachers into *some thousands of the inhabitants of these States*, he may then, and not until then, truthfully deny that the laity had any thing to do with the organization of American Methodism.

Mr. Choate's only error in imagining that we had not legally withdrawn from the Church, North, was, that he thought a majority of Annual Conferences less than two-thirds, insufficient, and this, with informalities in the action of the laity, prevented a legal division of the Church; therefore, we could not, under law, recover our just rights. But the plain principles of justice underlying the case—the fact that the two Churches were identical in doctrines and usages—that the leading department of our Church had consented to the division—that Southern preachers were, equally with Northern preachers, creators of this fund—and its proceeds, if divided with the South, would be distributed among similar beneficiaries, determined the Court, notwithstanding any apparent informalities, in the action of the Annual Conferences, and of the laity, to order the South a just proportion of this property.

Hence the Book Concern Property Case, proves that concern to be a valuable auxiliary of the gospel, and a holy charity. And the principles involved in its adjudication demonstrate, that in all grand as well as minor

movements in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the laity exercise an all-controlling influence; and that the government of Methodism, in all respects in which the Bible gives scope for human legislation, is modelled as Mr. Choate says, *after our secular union*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

I will briefly dispose of your miscellaneous matter. I think with your judicious correspondent from Mississippi, that it is not just to charge the conduct of Muncer—"that most eminent Baptist," and of his licentious and tyrannical band, upon modern Baptists; albeit his celebrated Dran, Dran, Dran proclamation, shows upon the very face of it, that it was a religious persecution. He says: "The ungodly will weep like children, but be you pitiless," &c. I quoted it to show that it was equally illogical and unjust to charge Wesley's love of the British monarchy upon American Methodism.

With regard to creeds; so long as there is a copy extant of the "Confession of faith and Baptist Discipline," from which I quoted so often in this discussion, and so long as you require the subscription of ministers to your written Articles of Faith, as you have done even here, in Tuskegee, I feel it would be injustice to you to class you with the Campbellites, who object to creeds.

Concerning open communion, I repeat, I concur with your great lights, John Bunyan, Baptist Noel, and Robert Hall, and with the last named, in both his premises and conclusions.

In answer to the question, whether I would admit any one to communion who had been expelled from the Me-

thodist Church, and had joined another Church, I remark—if not expelled for immoral conduct, I would.

I have been called repeatedly, in this discussion, to correct your errors; you may call them errors of fact, or errors of opinion, just which you please. I must again correct a very serious error, involving the rights of membership. You now admit that a bishop cannot reinstate an expelled member, but you say the Quarterly, Annual, and General Conferences can, and the principle is the same; you are altogether mistaken. All the Annual and General Conferences in America cannot reinstate a lay member, or have any thing whatever to do with his trial. A member, if he himself choose, can take his case up by appeal to the Quarterly Conference, and in Tuskegee, this Conference has not a single preacher out of some fourteen members, except myself. The presiding Elder has not even the casting vote in it. Nor has the preacher in charge so much as a casting vote in the trial of a member before the Church. In this particular you have more power over your members than I have in my charge.

You have frequently asked for the logic of my *exposure* of the disorders of the Baptist Church, in its bearing upon the point under discussion. I have answered, it was the *argumentum ad hominem*—the point was, if your system be Republican, much more is ours. It was to demonstrate the superiority of what the Hon. Rufus Choate calls that grand, beautiful, well compacted organization—the Methodist Church government, over the system of sad anarchy and confusion, called Baptist Church government. It would have been more agreeable to you, no doubt, if I had stood on the defensive only, and

not instituted a comparison between the two systems; but tastes will differ. If I have failed to pay my respects to every solitary argument you have advanced, I am not aware of it.

“THE CONTRAST.”

I now examine, as a *finale*, the “Contrast” you imagine yourself to have discovered between Methodism and Republicanism; an examination not very necessary after the foregoing review of the principles involved in the Church suit, and an exposure of the fallacies of the legal fictions, which were the chief support of the “Contrast.” I pursue the work, however, intending that that contrast shall be numbered with the things which are “twice dead, plucked up by the roots.”

I premise that the Bible contains all the doctrines and the essential principles of discipline, which govern gospel Churches; and the only scope given to Church legislation, is in the minor matters necessary to carry into detail these principles of divine legislation. In your “contrast,” you seem to have obliterated the distinction between what is the allotted scope for Church government and the province of divine legislation. In the last-named respect, there is, or should be, a “contrast” between the Church government of gospel Churches, and the best form of civil government; but in the former respect, that is, within the lawful sphere of Church legislation, it is proper there should be, and in the Methodist Church there certainly is, a most striking analogy between her Church government and Re-

publicanism. But to particularize, taking up your points *seriatim*.

In the first place, you say, "The Constitution of the United States was formed by representatives chosen by the people—the Book of Discipline by sixty clegymen—there was not a single layman's representative in it."

Ans. Mr. Choate says: "The Conference which created the organization of Methodism was in a remarkable degree analogous to the Convention which formed the Federal Constitution in 1787." They were every one of them elected to the ministry by the votes of the people; they acted in obedience to their strong and general demand, and so were representatives of the people on the one hand, and, having been called by the Spirit of Christ to the ministry, were representatives of Christ on the other part. Their doctrines and essential points of discipline were already formed to their hand by divine legislation, and had been voluntarily subscribed to by the people, and their duty was only to frame minor details in order to obedience to Christ's legislation, and these affected chiefly the ministry themselves.

Secondly: "The Constitution of the United States, when drafted, was submitted back again to the people: the Constitution of Methodism was adopted and forced upon their membership, and no layman asked to cast his suffrages by way of adopting it." Ans. The doctrines, and essential parts of Methodism, being Christ's legislation, and having been voluntarily recognized as such by every member, by the act of joining our Church; the less important details, bearing chiefly upon the itinerancy, which were left for regulation by a Conference composed of ministers elected to the ministry by the

people, like the less important laws passed by Congress for carrying out the principles of the Federal Constitution, were nor submitted back to the people, upon whom indeed, they had very little if any bearing.

Thirdly: "Amendments to the Constitution are submitted to their respective constituencies; amendments to the Discipline are foisted upon the Churches by the mere prerogative of the General Conference." Ans.—Amendments are essential changes in the Constitution, to be amended, and therein differ from ordinary legislation; but the essentials of the Methodist Discipline are not, and never have been subject to amendment, either by the laity, or any Conference whatever, because we cannot improve Christ's legislation. Nevertheless, the question of a duality of General Conference jurisdictions, leaving intact all other departments of the Church, all offices, rules, and usages, and therefore being no essential change of discipline, was notwithstanding, submitted back to the people, and decided according to their demands.

Fourthly: "The President of the United States, and the highest officers recognized by the General Government, are chosen by the people every two, three, or four years; the bishops of the Methodist Church are chosen for life by the General Conference, and are responsible only to their own consciences." Ans. The duration of their term of office is like the term of office of the Supreme Judges of the United States, and of the highest executive officers of the army and navy of our country; the appointment of bishops is similar to the appointment of these judges and high executive officers not directly from the people, and like them, they are subject

to impeachment by the Senate of the Methodist Church—the General Conference. They have also been called into the ministry for life by the Spirit of Christ; an advantage which cannot be claimed by the civil officers, whose term of office is of equal duration.

Fifthly: "The Congress of the United States, is composed of delegates elected by the suffrages of the several States, or by the people of the several States; the Annual and General Conferences of the Methodist Church, *ex officio*, of the bishops and travelling clergy; no layman of the Methodist Church ever cast a single ballot for a representative to either a State or General Conference." Ans. The Senate of the Methodist Church—the General Conference—like the Senate of the United States, is composed of delegates elected by the suffrages of the State or Annual Conferences; and every single member of our State or Annual Conferences was constituted such by two distinct votes of the people. Moreover, the action of our Annual and General Conferences, unlike laws passed in Congress for the people, is almost wholly restricted to the control of the ministers, who compose these bodies; and wherein it is not thus restricted, the laity in their several Churches, or in the side-societies of our Church, have co-ordinate or equal jurisdiction.

Sixthly. "The basis of representation in our civil institutions is the population of the States, except in the Senate, but in Methodism, the basis of representation is the travelling clergy." Ans. Well, it is sufficient for us if we imitate the exception named, in the wisest embodiment of Republicanism in the land—the Senate chamber. Still, we have a more equable basis than

that; our representation depends upon the number of the itinerants, and, therefore, the number of the representatives of our people; and much more have we an equable basis of representation than your last so called Southern Convention, in which though fourteen States should have been similarly represented, there were out of two hundred and eight delegates, ninety-four from Alabama, and none at all from three Southern States.

Your seventhly, is but a repetition of your fifthly, and is answered above.

Eighthly. "Our civil constitutions recognize checks and balances, tribunals to correct errors, &c.; but in Methodism, the will of the preacher or bishop is omnipotent in the premises." Ans. Bishop Hamline taught that the will of a General Conference was omnipotent to remove even a blameless bishop; and *a fortiori* a bishop charged with imprudencies. If this is not a check, what is it? This system of removals, as Bishop Hamline said, *for unacceptability to the people*, is like the President's removals of custom house officers, judges of territories, &c.; only that civil removals extinguish official powers, whereas Church removals only change the sphere of action; therefore, the power of removal with us in Church matters, is less than that possessed by the President in civil affairs.

Ninthly. "In the general government, the people choose directly or *indirectly* every officer; in Methodism, the travelling ministry appoint every officer," &c. Ans. I admire your caution in including *the indirect choice of every officer*; for sometimes that choice is removed several links from the people, as in the case of these high officers—Federal judges, and numerous executive offi-

cers of the government. In Methodism, there is an equal, if not greater directness from the people; all the itinerants are called directly by vote of the people, and by the Spirit of Christ, in which last respect, they have a claim to their office unknown to civil officers; and having through faithfulness, "purchased to themselves a good degree," their brethren acknowledge it by simply appointing them as first among equals, which action by our Church Senate rests upon better reasons than civil official appointments not received directly from the people.

Tenthly. "The right of petition is acknowledged by the general government, but the bishops of the Methodist Church say 'pardon us if we know of no such rights.'" Ans. The General Conference has never in a single instance denied the right of petition, or of memorializing them upon any subject. The right we deny is the right of a layman to order a hundred ministers, more or less, to the four winds, leaving them to decamp at his dictum, while he returned with quiet dignity to his home. It is like the refusal of Congress to pass laws at the instance of abolition petitions, which would control political and social interests in no wise affecting them; and, fortunately for us, the acts of Congress have very distinctly replied to such busy bodies in other men's matters: "We know no such rights, we comprehend no such privileges."

Your Eleventhly is contained in your Fifthly, and answered above.

Twelfth: "Congress is a body of limited powers; but the General Conference is a body unlimited in its au-

thority to create, and equally unlimited in the authority to destroy; it was in its power to become Socinian," &c.

Ans. The six restrictive articles forbidding any change in doctrines and rules, &c.; the protest of the Louisville Convention against this doctrine; the analysis of our Church government by Mr. Choate; the protest of leading men in the Church, North, and the entire history of Methodism, proves this legal fiction not only to be unfounded, but to be utterly absurd.

Thirteenth. "The Constitution of the United States alleges that we, the people of the United States, do ordain and establish this Constitution; the discipline affirms that Mr. Wesley preferred the Episcopal mode of Church government. One man, John Wesley, authorized the establishment of the Methodist Church." Ans. John Wesley himself, says in his letters recommending an organization, and letters of ordination to Dr. Coke: *Some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice, and in compliance with their desire, I have drawn up a little sketch.* The Conference which organized the American Methodist Church, says Mr. Choate, was *analogous in a remarkable degree to the Convention which formed the Federal Constitution in 1787.*

Fourteenth. "In the government of the United States, legislative, executive, and judicial powers are placed in the hands of three distinct classes of officers; in the Methodist Church, these powers are all in the same hands." Ans. Our bishops have no legislative powers at all; our Annual and General Conferences have no executive powers at all in any one of our thousands of Churches; and our preachers in charge have only judi-

cial powers in our Churches, besides other restrictions, too tedious to specify, and withal, the essential parts of our discipline are of Christ alone.

Your fifteenth is included in your fifth and tenth, and the answer to them is my reply.

Sixteenth: "Our civil constitutions recognize the principle, that all power is inherent in the people; in the Methodist Church, all power is inherent in the clergy."

Ans. The clergy have no power, so much as to vote in the expulsion of a member; they have no power, so much as to vote upon our doctrines and the essential parts of our discipline. The acknowledgement of the principle that all power is inherent in the people, in spiritual matters, would be an attempt to dethrone Christ as King in Zion.

Seventeenth: "In our civil government, the property is held by the people; in the Methodist Church it is held and disposed of by the clergy." Ans. The Book Concern property is held by the clergy in trust for specified holy uses, and rightfully, for that fund was mainly of their own creation; but in all church-buildings, colleges, &c., they have no property at all, not even to the value of a single cent; they have never claimed any right beyond the privilege of appointing preachers to the Churches.

Thus endeth the review of "The Contrast," establishing the fact, that where there should be a contrast between God's Church and a civil government, that contrast exists; but within the limited scope given for Church legislation, the analogy between the Methodist Church government, and the government of the United States, is striking. For the contrast between the dis-

jointed scheme, yeleft the Baptist Church governments, and our Federal Government, see my former communications. For brevity, I have compared our government with the Federal, and not State governments.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I congratulate all concerned, upon the pleasant character of the discussion now closing. I thank you for the courtesies you have extended to me, and do cordially reciprocate your kind regards. I felicitate myself upon the prospect of the publication of this discussion in a permanent form. I believe that it will not only not diminish, but rather increase that holy charity, but too imperfectly cherished by the two Churches to each other; that it will be productive of good to both Churches, and a noble example of the truth, that controversy can be carried on with kindness, and in a spirit of Christian forbearance.

With this spirit of holy charity resting upon our Churches, they will do good work in the cause of the great Head of the Church, whatever be the merits or defects of their systems of government. But without this spirit, though our preachers "spoke with the tongues of men, and of angels, and understood all mysteries, and all knowledge; though our members gave all their goods to feed the poor, and their bodies to be burned," it would profit them nothing.

I am satisfied with the discussion, and wish it to go to the world upon its own merits. In view of the cheapness of the publication, and its consequent wider circu-

lation; and that the circulation may be equally wide in both Churches, accompanied as it then will be, by the endorsement of both Methodists and Baptists, I hope you will in the magnanimity which you have hitherto shown me, and in justice to me, publish the "Addenda" recommended by the Tuskegee Association, in a separate volume. I propose, therefore, in order to secure these ends, that yourself and a committee of three from your Church, meet myself and those members of the Methodist Church who endorsed my first article, to confer upon and arrange all preliminaries necessary to give weight to the publication of this discussion.

With sentiments of Christian love,

I am, your brother in Christ,

E. J. HAMILL.

November 8th, 1855.

REPLY TO LETTER VI.

METHODIST CHURCH PROPERTY CASE AGAIN.

Error must be removed before Truth can be established; No foundation for Episcopacy in the Scriptures, according to its most able defenders; Time, place, and circumstances supply its only defence; Manifest perversion and misconstruction of arguments; The *objects* for which the Book Fund was raised, *not* the subject of debate; Changing the issue; Another specimen of Methodist logic; The "holy charity" not too holy for lay management; A plain statement of the case; The question at issue between the parties; Decision of the court; Mr. Choate's "view of Methodism" answered by Mr. Johnson, declared sophistical by the court, and overruled; Difference between a General Conference possessing sovereign power, and the Congress of the United States possessing limited powers; Mr. Wesley's letter *granting* the request of his American children; Application of the principles involved in the law suit to the entire system of Methodism; An inventory of facts; Are legal gentlemen of the first distinction, and learned judges capable of understanding "the Book of Discipline" and "the History of Methodism," when they are in evidence before them? A trilemma; ; Some credit is due the solemn decisions of our National Courts.

THE STANDARDS.

Another appeal to the standards, in search of the "democratic element;" Watson's Theological Institutes; Prof. C.F. Deems; Judge Longstreet; Lorenzo Dow; Isaac Taylor; Rev. R. Abby; Aristocracy; An interesting experiment suggested; A transfer of

property implies proprietorship; Protests; Judicial exposition of Methodism; An odium which is proof against all "protests;" The "could" and the "would" of the General Conference not subject to the Churches; Not likely that the same men would act differently in a General and Annual Conference; Another extract from the Opinion of the Court; Three remarkable conclusions; How a cypher in the premises becomes "an all-controlling" numerical number in the conclusion; An improvement on Bishop Taylor's discovery of Truth without evidence; How a system of government which "has no constituents" is "modified after our grand secular union;" Synopsis.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mr. Wesley, and *not* "the will of the laity, acting through the ministry," the father of American Methodism; The Munster insurrectionists sustain no such relation to the Baptists; The authority of creeds; The Methodist Church more holy than the Lord's table; The jurisdiction of Quarterly and Annual Conferences; The Book of Discipline responsible for the error; The relative power of a Methodist and Baptist pastor; "Anarchy and confusion, called Baptist Church government;" "Tastes will differ;" An illustrative anecdote.

THE CONTRAST.

A modest pledge; **A wonderful draft upon popular credulity**; The voluntary adoption of a form of government does not make it Republican; an essential change in the constitution of Methodism not submitted to the laity for confirmation; Judges and military officers not law-making authorities; The constituents of a General Conference and of the Congress of the United States contrasted; Senate of the United States; Baptist Conventions *not* legislative bodies, therefore, cannot infringe upon the rights of the Churches; Seventh, eleventh, and fifteenth points *not* identical with the fifth; Bishop Hamline stationed to guard the eighth point; "Philadelphia Church Advocate;" Question for the Protestant Methodists to answer; "Protests" vs. Facts; The "Standards;" Bishop Bascom detailed to guard the four-

teenth point; Clerical absolutism; Trustees of Church property; Something about "killing and plucking up by the roots," what the fathers of "our Episcopacy" planted; The *seventeen points* sustained; Mr. Hamill the antagonist of the Circuit Court of the United States, *not ours*; An important concession the basis of a strange conclusion; Was apostolic Church government "a disjointed system of anarchy and confusion?" The Church government adopted by Christ and his Apostles preferable to that despotic "scheme yclept" Methodist Episcopacy, fastened upon Methodists by Wesley and sixty travelling preachers, in 1784; Proposition in regard to the joint publication of the discussion; Concession to secure this; Reciprocal courtesy; Conclusion.

"We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."—ISAIAH, iv. 1.

"For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace peace, when there is no peace."—JER., viii. 11.

If men's judgments were not warped and distorted by their prejudices and passions, TRUTH would always be a welcome guest. But ever since sin despoiled the handiwork of God, this virgin form of heavenly mould has been doomed to a perpetual war with the lower and baser affections of the human soul. Like the fabled Osiris, she has been hewn in pieces, and the fragments have been scattered to the four winds of heaven, thereby devolving upon her sad friends the task of hunting up these fragments, and by a kind of moral synthesis, restoring her again to her former loveliness and symmetry. This consummation may be long delayed. Many fierce contests may yet lie between her votaries and the promised victory. But He who has commissioned them to execute this sacred trust will see to it, that their labors shall not be intermitted, until every member of the body of this martyred saint shall be restored, and "the

Spirit of life from God, shall enter into it; and it shall stand up, and great fear fall upon them who see it."

Now, it must strike every sensible man with all the force of an overwhelming conviction, that the exposing and subversion of error is an essential condition precedent to the establishment of truth. A large portion of the labors of our Saviour were devoted to the refutation of the prevailing errors of the age in which he lived upon earth—called in Scripture "the traditions of the elders," He employed no palliating terms by which to call them. With the integrity and sternness of Divinity itself, he knew nothing of expedients and compromises. Denouncing these apologists of error as a "generation of vipers" and "hypocrites," woe after woe falls from his lips like so many claps of thunder. "In vain do ye worship me," he says, "*teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*" And is error less offensive to him *now* than it was *then*? Nay, verily. Whatever is taught for doctrines which bears not the heavenly inscription, should be denounced as "the commandments of men." And he who compromises "one jot or tittle" of divine truth to popular opinion, is unworthy of human or divine trust.

That Episcopacy has no foundation in the Word of God, is freely admitted by its best and most able champions. Dr. Bangs, quoted by the Rev. Mr. Stevens, a Methodist clergyman, in his "Essay on Church Polity," says: "No specific form of Church government is prescribed in Scripture, and therefore it is left to the discretion of the Church to regulate these matters, as the exigencies of the time, place, and circumstances shall


dictate to be most expedient, and likely to accomplish the greatest amount of good; always avoiding any and everything which God has prohibited." Bishop Beveridge, says: "Nothing can be determined from what the Apostles did in their early proceedings, in preaching the gospel, as to the establishment of any certain form of Church government." *Ut supra*. To these we may add the testimony of Mr. Wesley, in a letter to Mr. Clark: "I think he (Bishop Stillingfleet,) has unanswerably proved, that neither Christ nor his Apostles prescribe any particular form of Church government, and that the plea of the divine right of *Episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive Church*." Works, vol. x. p. 231. So that the only defence of which Episcopacy admits at all, is that which "time, place, and circumstances" may suggest. Throwing ourselves even upon this flimsy and miserable subterfuge—a subterfuge which error is always proposing when grappling with truth, begging only to be recognized as an *equal* party in the contest—we say, granting all this, we still fight Episcopacy with the weapons which "time, place, and circumstances" have thrown in our hands. As to the "time," it is the middle of the nineteenth century, when man is engaged in making the last great experiment as to whether he is able to govern himself, or whether he must still groan under a self-constituted despotism, religious or political, "which has no constituents." And then, as to the "place," it is the free Commonwealth of the United States, the favored spot of earth, the asylum for the oppressed of all nations, where all men are recognized as equal. If, then, the "place" is to have an agency in modifying ecclesiastical polity, we claim that

Episcopacy shall surrender her mitre to that heavenly appointed constituency in the Churches of the Saints, whose nobility has been patented by the Triune God; who are his "kings and priests"—even as civil despots have been made to surrender their crown to that power behind the throne more potent than "cabals" and "star chambers." And finally, as to the "circumstances"—these all point unmistakably to such a reformation in "our Episcopacy," as will compel her to "*know the rights and comprehend the privileges*" of a "*constituency*."

But our purpose is not to introduce a new train of argument in this discussion, for we have already concluded our part of the argument, but simply to respond to Brother Hamill's last communication. And the reader will doubtless agree with our first impression on receiving it from his hands. If it is only as *logical* as it is *lengthy*, it is certainly a very stern document. But on wading through it, we found it to be but a reiteration of much of his preceding articles, adapted only to our two last articles.

In regard to the "CHURCH PROPERTY CASE," there are but two or three points in his article which merit our attention. He has doubtless given a faithful account of the origin and history of the "Book Concern." With this, however, we have nothing to do. We have been discussing a *principle* in Episcopal Methodism which determined the division of that fund between the North and the South. And this is the *first* point to which the reader's attention is invited. How Bro. Hamill could have misconstrued the whole drift of our argument upon that case, we are at a loss to determine. After stating

the benevolent *objects* of the "Book Concern," viz: to circulate a religious literature, and support supernumerary and superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of deceased ministers, he asks: "Can any rational man pronounce such an institution, contemplating such holy ends, anti-Republican!" We utterly deny having pronounced any such thing. We never so much as alluded to the *objects* contemplated in the establishment of that "Concern." The *objects* it contemplates is one thing—the *principles* on which it is administered is quite a different thing. Now, Brother Hamill seeks to make us affirm that of the *objects* of this fund, which we affirmed of the *principles* on which an equitable division of it was made between the North and South, by the judicial tribunals of the country. And that he had to resort to such a subterfuge as this, to meet as plain an argument at least as we are capable of writing, and pervert it to a purpose which never entered our head, is proof demonstrative that he felt incompetent to meet it fairly. There is a legal phrase, called "changing issue," which simply means, that when one party feels unable to meet the main issue involved, he substitutes another which he *can* meet, and pleads to it, as if *it* were the main point—and this is always equivalent to giving up the case. We are discussing a *principle* which determined an important law-suit between Northern and Southern Episcopacy. Brother Hamill substitutes the *objects* for which the money was raised, involved in the contest, for the *principle* which decided the law-suit, and makes us affirm that of these *objects*, which we only affirmed applied to the *principle* in



"our Episcopacy" which decided the suit! Nay, he rings the changes upon it, as if he had made a discovery which was forever to vindicate the claims of Episcopal Methodism as a pure Republican Democracy as ever placed a President in the White House! The objects of the Methodist Book Concern anti-Republican!! Is that the subject we have been discussing, Brother Hamill? Something has been said in this discussion about "twisification."

The *logic* of his argument upon this part of the subject is this (and the reader will see that he chimes in very well with much that he has heretofore written): The objects for which the book fund was raised, were "pure and holy," nay, "the holiest and most benevolent in the land;" *ergo*, Episcopal Methodism is decidedly Republican! So much, then, for this misconception and perversion of our argument.

Let it be observed, furthermore, that Brother Hamill does not deny that the book fund is under the sole management of the ministry, (just what we affirmed,) nay, that it *ought* to be under their management, because it has mainly accumulated under their agency. Here our brother has unconsciously announced a principle which we could wish he had the candor to acknowledge as applicable to the whole system. Let us explain. The book fund has mainly accumulated under clerical agency, therefore it ought to be under clerical management; so affirms Brother Hamill. By parity of reasoning, meeting-houses, parsonages, conference colleges, and academies, have been projected and built under clerical agency, therefore they ought to be decided to them, in

their General Conference capacity! People have been added to the Church under clerical agency, therefore they ought to be under their rule and management!! What immaculate Republicanism! And then—where did this book fund come from? Are the preachers so well paid for their services, that they have been able to accumulate a fund in the United States, of nearly a million of dollars, out of their salaries? If so, they have been better paid than we had anticipated. Or is it owing to their superior financial skill, in changing hundreds into thousands, with *Astorian* rapidity? We could scarcely expect this. We once heard of five Yankees who shut themselves up in a room, and swapped clothing until they made five dollars a-piece; but we would not suspect Methodist clergymen as possessing such skill as this. But seriously, we suppose that fund was raised like all other benevolent funds of the various Churches, by a system of agencies, in which the ministry were mostly employed, in contributions from private members, ministers, and every body else who felt inclined to give to it. Granted, therefore, that it has been raised mostly through the agency of ministers, and “for the holiest and most benevolent of purposes in the land,” does that prove that laymen are too “common and unclean” to assist in managing this holy and benevolent fund? Is there a peculiar sanctity imparted to it by its having passed through clerical hands, that it must forever be placed beyond the management and control of those from whose pockets it was, at least in part, obtained? Are they less capable of managing, and more likely to pervert it from its “holy and benevolent de-

sign," than the clergy? Really, we think our brother has paid rather an equivocal compliment, either to the skill or the integrity of the laity of his Church.

- Passing over some minor matters which we can well afford to do, we come to the *second* point in Bro. Hamill's argument; and it is one of far greater importance than the foregoing. It relates to the *source* whence he has drawn his testimony in the Property Case. It is proper that we again state this case to the reader, so that he can appreciate the relative value of the testimony, as introduced by Bro. Hamill and ourself.

In 1844, on the *degradation* of Bishop Andrew for being a slave-holder, a series of resolutions were passed by the General Conference, contemplating a contingent division of Church property between the North and the South. Commissioners were appointed to carry out the provisions of these resolutions in case that contingency occurred—which was the organization of a Southern General Conference, and the adoption of the resolutions by a majority of the Annual Conferences. These commissioners were specifically instructed to negotiate an equitable division of the assets of the Book Concern, with an equal number of commissioners appointed on the part of the South. Immediately after the Southern General Conference was organized, the commissioners on the part of the South, signified their readiness to discharge their duty, but, from sundry causes, the Northern commissioners refused to meet them. Whereupon suit was brought by the Southern commissioners to recover their proportion of said funds, according to the terms stipulated in the resolutions of the General Conference. To

prevent any sort of confusion, we will give a statement of the suit, as reported and published by both divisions of the Church:

"CIRCUIT COURT, UNITED STATES,

For the Southern District of New York.

The Honorable Judges NELSON and BETTS, Presiding.

HENRY B. BASCOM, and others,	} In Equity.
<i>vs.</i>	
GEORGE LANE, and others.	

Counsel for Plaintiffs—Mr. D. LORD, Hon. REVERDY JOHNSON, and Mr. JOHNSON, Jr.

Counsel for Defendants—Hon. RUFUS CHOATE, Mr GEO. WOOD, and Mr. E. L. FANCHER."

Now, the question at issue between the parties litigant in this suit, was, as stated by Judge Nelson, "As to the power of the General Conference to authorize a separation of the Church organization," upon the settlement of which question "depended the division of the common property." *Appendix to Property Case*, p. 10. The counsel for the South maintained that the General Conference had the power to authorize a separation of the Church, and to divide its property. The counsel for the North denied such power to the General Conference. *The Court decided this point in favor of the plaintiffs, and they consequently gained the suit.* For this reason we made our quotations from the speeches of the coun-

sel for the successful party. Mr. Johnson and his colleagues maintained that the Conference of 1784, who "organized the Church, established its doctrines and discipline," &c., possessed no more nor less power than the Conference of 1844, only as they restricted themselves by "the six restrictive rules." Mr. Choate and his colleagues maintained, on the contrary, that the Conference of 1784 was *sui generis*—that when it organized the Church, it disappeared, and has never convened since. "When that Conference had done its work of creating the Church," says Mr. Choate, "it retired, disappeared, and has never again been assembled in the history of Methodism." *Property Case*, p. 266. This was the issue between them. The counsel for the plaintiffs alleged in proof of their position, that the General Conference had, time and again, exercised all the powers of sovereignty; that they had extended their jurisdiction beyond the territorial limits of the United States, into Canada and Texas; that they had authorized a separation of the Canada Conference from the General Conference, in 1828; that they had frequently changed the Book of Discipline, &c., &c. And, we repeat it, the South gained the suit—and gained it, too, upon that exposition of Methodist Church polity furnished by their counsel. We shall still further prove before we close this article, from the decision of the Court, that the doctrines advanced by the Southern counsel, and which we extracted into the article Brother Hamill reviews, were triumphantly sustained.

And while on this subject, we must correct another very sad blunder into which Brother Hamill has fallen. Quoting Mr. Choate as saying that the General Confer-

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ence which organized the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, was "*analogous to the Convention that created the Federal Constitution in 1787*," he seems to think he has made *the* discovery, which at once and beyond all doubt, assimilates Episcopacy to Republicanism. Here our brother has evidently shouted before he got happy. We are really sorry to deprive him of the last and only plank upon which he has planted "our Episcopacy," particularly as the seas are rough. But thankless as will be the task, and painful as is the necessity, we are compelled to do it. In what did the analogy between the General Conference in 1784, and the Convention of the States in 1787 consist? In the manner in which the members of each were chosen—by the *popular will*? No man will pretend this in the face of the fact, that not a single Methodist society in the Union ever elected a delegate to that Conference. Mr. Choate himself, though interested to prove that it was called by the Societies, could not do so even to his own satisfaction; for he says: "It may be stated that the true creator of the Church was the general and collective will of American Methodism acting through the laity and through the preachers. Or it may be said that it was the collective will of American Methodism, expressing itself and acting through an extraordinary Convention, *called under a letter of Mr. Wesley, for that express purpose*, which did its work, and then disappeared." (p. 268.) Observe, Mr. Choate seeks to entrench himself upon both of these positions; so that if the first failed (*and it did fail*,) *he could retreat upon the second*. In what, then, did the analogy consist? Why, clearly in this; that they were both extraordinary Conventions, convened for extraordinary purposes, and

which "did their work and then disappeared." And yet Brother Hamill would impress the reader with the idea that Mr. Choate recognized a beautiful analogy between Episcopal Methodism, as organized, and our civil government, as organized! when Mr. Choate only alleged the analogy between the Conference of 1784, *as organizing* Methodism, and the Convention of 1787, *as organizing* our Federal Constitution, in the single point, that they each did their work and ceased to exist. Whether our brother's blindness in this respect is moral or natural, it becomes us not to say.

As Mr. Choate stated in his speech that "the preachers acted in obedience to the wishes of the people," in the Conference of 1784; that that body was "American Methodism acting *through the laity* and through the ministry," and as Brother Hamill seems to endorse that sentiment, we will let Mr. Johnson, one of the counsel for the South, answer both. He says:

"Where did the predecessors of the Northern preachers from whom all authority is derived, look for the power to call the Conference of 1784, for the purpose for which it was called? To John Wesley, as the person in whom, at that time, was vested *the entire and exclusive sovereign power of the Church*. It is unnecessary to inquire whether by virtue of some inherent and inalienable right, the power might not have been found in these gentlemen, in 1784, irrespective of the will of Wesley. It is sufficient for me to show, that in 1784, they claimed, and claimed alone, the power they exerted in the Conference of that year, under the authority of Wesley, *as the author, sovereign, and founder of the Church*. Who constituted the Conference of 1784? My learned

brother who spoke first upon the other side, would have had your Honors to believe, what of course he satisfied himself was the fact, that that Conference was called together not only by the preachers of the Church, but by all the lay members. *There is not a word of truth in the statement*, although, of course, the learned counsel believed it to be true. It was a general assembly of the preachers connected with the Methodist denomination of Christians, convoked only as preachers, without reference to any lay authority, express or implied. Not being as familiar with the history of the Church as my colleague, who was kind enough to undertake to lay before the Court the evidence which is found spread upon the records in the case, I inquired, as soon as the statement was made, whether there was any foundation for the assertion that the Conference of 1784, had any other authority for its convocation than the authority of Wesley, and the authority in themselves as preachers, alone connected with the Methodist Association. I found that there was not. If your Honors will turn to page 5 of the Proofs No. 1, you will find, that immediately succeeding the letter of Wesley, which authorized the separate organization, it is stated: 'To carry in effect the proposed organization' (Wesley's proposed organization) 'a General Conference of preachers was called, to meet at Baltimore at Christmas, 1784. Sixty out of the eighty-three preachers then in the travelling connexion, attended at the appointed time. At this Conference, say the Annual Minutes of 1785, it was unanimously agreed that circumstances made it expedient for us (that is, the preachers) 'to become a separate body,' &c. *They admit no constituency.* The time is perhaps coming,

when in all probability, *they will be obliged to admit one for the good of the Church. They resolve for themselves, and for themselves alone, as the possessors of all the ecclesiastical power known to the Methodist Church, to carry out the particular organization authorized by John Wesley, without reference to any other authority than this, and their own convictions that the good of the Church demanded such a special and particular organization."*

As to the declaration of Mr. Choate, that "for the conduct of its general affairs, it proceeds on the plan of our grand secular union, having a general body," &c.; we submit, that if Mr. Choate had proven that to the satisfaction of the court, *he* would have gained the case—for this obvious reason: If the General Conference had no more authority as an ecclesiastical body, than the Congress of the United States has as a civil body, then it had no right to authorize a separation of the Church, any more than Congress has a right to destroy this confederacy. The Congress of the United States is governed by a written constitution, *adopted by a power superior to themselves*, and they dare not violate it. The General Conference is governed by a constitution *adopted by themselves, and which recognizes no power beyond themselves*. And hence the court decided, that the preachers "when assembled in General Conference, *according to the usages and discipline of the Church*, represent themselves, and have no constituents." Mr. Choate, therefore, failed in establishing his point before the court, and lost the suit. Thrown into an argument, it may be stated thus: The power to dissolve a social or religious compact, is an attribute of sovereignty. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "accord-

ing to the usage and discipline of that Church," may exercise this power. Therefore, the General Conference is the sovereign power of that Church, "responsible only to themselves" for its exercise. And yet Brother Hamill quotes this declaration of Mr. Chote to show the Republicanism of his Church!

His quotation from Mr. Wesley's letter, yielding to the wishes of his American children to give them a separate organization, only proves what Mr. Johnson affirms, that he (Wesley) "*is the author, sovereign, and founder of the Church.*" If several thousand Englishmen should petition the Queen and Parliament to pass a certain law, and their wishes should be respected, would that prove that English monarchy was Republicanism. The very fact that Mr. Wesley was petitioned to *grant* them a separate organization, is a concession that they had no right to form one. If our colonies, after the Revolutionary war, had petitioned Lord North, or King George, for a constitution, instead of forming one for themselves, what an impressive commentary on their democracy!!

The *third* and last point in this part of Bro. Hamill's communication, requiring notice, is that which relates directly to the *application* of the principle above suggested, to the Property Case. After demurring to the extracts of the speeches we made, from Messrs. Lord and Johnson, Brother Hamill says: "It may be asked, then did the Church, South, recover its property upon false principles? I answer, no." The principles set forth in the debate, were "false in their application to all other matters of Church polity, but true *in their application to the Book Concern Fund,*" &c. Truly "our Episcopacy"

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must be an impenetrable mystery. If neither the first lawyers nor the highest judicial functionaries of the United States can understand it, we need not wonder that our *impertinence* has been so sternly rebuked for daring to look into its sublime mysteries! Now, this special "application" of special "principles" to special "cases" is a very convenient weapon with which to fight the battles of Episcopacy. If local preachers and private members petition for "mutual rights" in the General and Annual Conferences, this special "principle" will apply with special emphasis to that "case," and they are answered with, "pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges." If a lawsuit is pending between "our Episcopacy," North, and "our Episcopacy," South, in which the stake is nearly half a million of dollars, why then, also, this special "principle" applies with singular appropriateness and *profit* to this "case." And then the fund has been mostly raised and accumulated by clerical agency, and is so sacred, and designed for "the holiest and most benevolent purposes;" that it must not be managed by any other than clerical hands. In this respect too, "they admit no constituents; they have no constituents." So that at whatever point we direct our search for a "constituency" in "our Episcopacy," either in its *ecclesiastical* or *temporal* jurisdiction, this special *principle* applies with peculiar propriety to that special point. We should like to know if the *parts* are thus destitute of the "Democratic element," what is to be pronounced of the *whole*?

But let us look into this *chameleon* principle, which applies so peculiarly to every case, and which yet leaves

the whole system perfectly free from its contagion. Now, we assert, *that this principle—the principle of absolute irresponsible clerical power—PERVADES THE WHOLE GOVERNMENTAL ECONOMY OF EPISCOPAL METHODISM.* Take the following inventory of FACTS in proof of this assertion. The bishops appoint all the circuit riders and stationed preachers to their charges; the bishops appoint every presiding elder to his circuit; the preachers and elders appoint all the class leaders, stewards and trustees, who hold church property; the bishops, elders, and preachers remove at their pleasure, all their respective appointees, the removed party having no alternative but *submission*, there “being no tribunal to correct errors or rectify wrongs;” that in not a single department of their government, legislative, executive, or judicial, are laymen eligible to seats; that both the State and General Conferences are composed, *ex officio*, of the travelling preachers and *their* representatives; that when local preachers and private members petition for a *representation* in these bodies, they are answered in language, which, if addressed to American citizens in their civil capacity, by our National or State government, would instantly light up the fires of a second revolution: “Pardon us if we know no such *rights*, if we comprehend no such *privileges*,” that this body of clergy, in creating the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, and dissolving it in 1844, exercised the highest attributes of sovereignty known on earth; that the General Conference, in transferring “all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in meeting-houses, parsonages, colleges, schools, Conference funds, cemeteries, *and of every kind*,” within the limits of the Southern organization, to

the Church, South, on the contingency of its organization, did assert all the proprietorship in said property, which the laws of the country guaranty to any corporation; that in authorizing an equitable division of the "Book and Chartered Fund," the same principle of proprietorship is involved; and that such facts as these being in evidence before the Court, in the "Church Property Case," that august tribunal could have made no other decision in that case than that "*the lay members of the Church have no part or connection with its governmental organization, and never had.*" The travelling preachers comprise the embodiment of its power, *ecclesiastical and temporal*; and when assembled in General Conference, according to the USAGES and DISCIPLINE of the Church, represent themselves and "have no constituents."

But Brother Hamill, conscious that the facts and arguments we had adduced from the "Property Case," could not be answered, admits that, so far as the "rights of property, which the Courts of our country will recognize," are concerned, "the opinions of legal gentlemen . . . are worthy of the highest respect. But upon questions of Church polity," they "cannot possibly understand them as thoroughly" as those who are "connected with their respective Church systems;" and then asks and answers, as before stated, thus: "Did the Church, South, recover its property upon false principles? I answer, no; there were principles set forth in the debate, which were *false* in their application to all other matters of Church polity, but *true* in their application to the Book Concern Fund." Now, this is a species of *special pleading* which would do honor to a Jesuit. Let us look at it: A question of Church pro-

perty comes up before one of our highest judicial tribunals, to be decided; the parties to the suit are responsible for the testimony upon either side; the Court is responsible for the application of the law to the state of facts involved in the testimony. On page 25, of the "Church Property Case," it is agreed by the parties to the suit, "that the Book of Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, printed in 1840, which was the book in force at the time of the Conference of 1844," together with "Emory's History of the Discipline of the Church," "shall be considered as evidence." These "Standards" set forth the general polity of that hierarchy. Either, therefore, the "Book of Discipline" and "Emory's History," contained "principles which were *false* in their application to all other matters of Church polity, but *true* in their application to the Book Concern Fund," or the "*legal gentleman*" who argued the case, and the learned judges who decided it, were incompetent to comprehend the evidence before them! or if they comprehended it, they have wilfully perverted it! "Our Episcopacy" may take either horn of the trilemma. The decision was made, if the judges are to be believed, "*according to the usages and discipline of the Church*," as set forth in its "Standards." If these "Standards" are "*false*," the "Fathers" made them so, and the children ought to correct them. If judgment has been perverted, either through the *imbecility* or *corruption* of our judiciary, Judges NELSON and BETTS ought to be impeached. In either case "our Episcopacy" ought to set herself to work with all possible promptness and energy. The merest pettifogger that ever read half a dozen pages in Blackstone, could not hesitate one moment after reading the opinion of that Court, in de-

ciding, that the principles on which that opinion was based, were the essential organic elements of Episcopal Methodism. This, neither Bro. Hamill, nor any other sane man, will deny. If the learned tribunals of our country cannot comprehend "this system of surpassing energy," we humbly submit, that it is time it was simplified to their comprehension. The American people have been accustomed to regard the opinions of our national Courts with some degree of respect. And it need not surprise this "kingdom of the clergy," if the judicial records of the country shall be believed, *their* averment to the contrary notwithstanding.

The sum of our answer is this:

I. Our review of the "Church Property Case" has been palpably misconstrued. Brother Hamill makes us affirm that of the *object* for which the Book and Chartered Fund was raised, which we affirmed of the *principles* on which the Court ordered it to be divided between the North and South.

II. Bro. Hamill derives his testimony from the *wrong source*. He relies mostly upon Mr. Choate, the counsel for the defendants (the Northern division of the Church), *who lost the suit*. We derived ours from Messrs. Lord, Johnson, and the Court—the *party who gained the suit*. Our testimony is taken from the *accredited judicial records of the country*. That is to say, he quotes his exposition of Episcopacy from the counsel *whose arguments were declared sophistical by the Court, and were therefore overruled*; we quoted from the counsel *whose arguments were substantially adopted by the Court as its decision*.

III. Our antagonist maintains that the principles which decided that suit, were *false* in their application

to all other matters of Church polity, but *true* in their application to the Book Concern Fund. We have proved, *from the decision of the Court*, that these principles pervade the entire governmental economy of Methodist Episcopacy.

THE STANDARDS.

But we are asked why we did not appeal to the "Standards of our Church," instead of to the opinions of legal gentlemen," in this discussion; and it is intimated that our "failure to do this is an evidence of the weakness of our cause, and the groundlessness of our allegations." How our brother could make such an intimation as this, with this whole discussion staring him in the face, we are really at a loss to determine. He could not hope to deceive anybody who has read our articles, for that were impossible, and we therefore acquit him of that charge. The most charitable construction we can place upon the statement is, that the stress of a dire necessity which knows no law, suspended for a time the operation of every other principle in his heart and mind, but "our Episcopacy;" that, as we had occasion to remark in regard to another champion of Methodism, it was not Brother Hamill who did this, but Episcopacy that dwelt in him. Reader, have we not appealed to these "Standards" from the very commencement of this discussion? Have we ventured to state a single fact, from first to last, which we have not sustained by these very Standards? *Has our competitor contested the authenticity of a single one of these facts?* Or are we mistaken as to what

these "Standards" are? Are the writings of Mr. Wesley; the Book of Discipline; the accredited histories of Methodism, issued by the "Book Concern;" the reported proceedings of General Conferences; the speeches and communications of the bishops, doctors, and clergy of the Church; are these, we say, to be recognized as the "Standards" of Methodism? To these we have appealed to substantiate every fact and principle we have alleged through this entire discussion. Two of these "Standards," to wit: The Book of Discipline and Emory's History, furnished the testimony on which the "Property Case" was decided in the United States Circuit Court, for the Southern District of New York. And yet our "failure to do this is *prima facie* evidence of the weakness of our cause, and groundlessness of our allegations!!" Now, we are perfectly willing for any tribunal on this earth, except the "travelling clergy," to decide whether we have not appealed to "our standards" quite as often as Episcopacy itself has any right to demand.

Before dismissing this point, we shall introduce a few more quotations from the "Standards" and other sources, which we think are entitled to some respect in the premises. In WATSON'S THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTES, a work which we suppose may be dignified by the appellation of "Standard," as it is "in the course of study" for the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we have the following: "To raise into legislators and censors all the members of a Church, the young, the ignorant, and the inexperienced, is to do them a great injury. It is the sure way to foster debates, contentions and self-confidence, to open the door to intrigue and policy, to tempt forward and conceited men to become a kind of

religious demagogues, and entirely to destroy the salutary influence of the aged, experienced, and gifted members, by referring every decision to members and suffrages, and placing all that is good and venerable and influential among the members themselves, at the feet of a Democracy." Vol. ii. p. 594. Why, the veriest apologist of monarchy in Europe, could not have written a sentence exhibiting more supreme contempt for the very spirit and genius of our civil government than this extract from one of "our Standards." The "members of a Church"—the laity—are represented as "ignorant, inexperienced, contentious, self-confident, conceited, *religious demagogues*." And then this learned divine, by way of putting upon this assemblage of "conceited men" the crowning odium, calls them "*a Democracy!*" We opine, that if the lofty pretensions of the clergy were placed at the feet of such a Democracy, there would be a storm raised; there would be "debates and contentions" such as "our Episcopacy" has never witnessed before; and which would effectually sweep away the last vestiges of clerical domination. We can but admire the discretion of "our Standards" in not "placing at the feet of a democracy," the "divine right" of the clergy to rule over them.

The following is from Prof. C. F. DEEMS, of North-Carolina; and although he may not be exactly a "standard," he is nevertheless a very good Methodist:

"If we may apply the figure to Methodism, we can very readily see that a government suited to the sooty colliers of England, servants, and the uncultivated, who had grown up amid all the peculiarities of an aristocra-

tic country, might hardly be fit for a Church among whose laymen are presidents, and professors in colleges, judges of supreme courts, senators, and men liberalized by professional learning and polite associations. The fact is John Wesley formed *societies*; ours is a *Church*. John Wesley did not make government a special study; but, being a strong man and a violent tory, and finding a sect gathering around him to be governed, he seized the reins—he became autocrat; and through his helpers he governed most ably. It was very natural that when our Church was formed, it should be built somewhat after the model of the ‘societies’ of Wesley. Is it not too exact a copy, and may it not need mending? Even if Wesley had made government a study, and was by nature superior to the mass he controlled, there are laymen in our Church in this day, as great natively as Wesley, who have paid much more attention to the science of government. This is said with great deference and much veneration for many things in the character of John Wesley. He was before his times; ours before him.”

We cannot tell whether we are to regard the author of the “Georgia Scenes,” Judge LONGSTREET, as entitled to be ranked among “our standards,” or not. He is at least a Methodist clergyman, and President of the Mississippi College; and from that lofty pedestal, he addresses his Methodist brethren, dissuading them from joining the Know Nothing or American party, in the following strains. Alluding to the letter of Mr. Wesley to the Catholics, he says:

“That letter was written to show that Protestants would not be safe from oppression under Catholic government. No doubt of it in the world. Nor would Catholics be safe under Methodist government, as your plots against them, now, most clearly demonstrate. The

truth is, no religious sect is to be trusted with the reins of government. And if I were to take the stump against you, I would say to the honest yeomanry of the country: Good people, if you think that your liberties will be any safer in the hands of Methodists than Catholics, you are vastly mistaken. *And in proof of this assertion, I would point to the outrages of the Methodist majority in 1844, which split our Church.* I would add in humiliation, but in candor: You have ten thousand times more to fear, just at this time, from Methodists than Catholics; simply because the first are more numerous than the last; because the first are actually in the field for office, while the last are not; because the first are in open war upon the last; and because the first, by reason of their numbers, are pets of the strongest political combination that ever was formed in this country—secret and oath-bound at that. Suppose their religion does spread, with the unexampled rapidity with which yours has, who has a right to object? Will you forbid men to choose their own religion? In all the essentials of Christianity, do they not agree with you? Wesley thought so, and I think so. Do they differ from you wider in faith than your Unitarian confederates?"

As Brother Hamill has already declared his readiness to receive and recognize Roman Catholic baptism, nay, that he would even administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the members of that apostate Church; and as Judge LONGSTREET, in the foregoing extract asks: "*In all the essentials of Christianity, do not they (i. e. the Catholics) AGREE with you?*" (Methodists) and answers: "WESLEY THOUGHT so, and I think so!" we are led to conclude that Episcopacy is substantially the same, whether in its Roman, English, or American form.

As we have not pried into the leaves of the "*Index Expurgatorius*" of American Episcopacy, we do not

know whether the "Life and writings of LORENZO DOW" have yet been put under ban. And in the absence of this intelligence, the reader will excuse us if we take his deposition. Speaking of the power of a bishop to send the "travelling clergy" whithersoever he will, and of the general polity of Episcopal Methodism, he says:

"Did the pope ever have unlimited power without the voice of any other person, to command six hundred men, and send them when and where he pleased, because it was his will and pleasure to have it so? 'to say to one, go, and he goeth, and to another, come, and he cometh, and to this man, do this, and he doeth it?'"

I know not where it is recorded in history, that the pope did command six hundred men, in their ecclesiastical and clerical capacity, to send them here and there, because it was his will and pleasure so to have it, and that over the country, near two thousand miles one way, and fifteen hundred the other.

How much less is the power of the President of the United States? How much greater the privilege of the citizens, to have a voice by their representatives in the formation of those rules by which they are to be governed; and the liberty of speech and of the press, to remark on the rules and conduct of those who form the rules, and their mode of governing.

The mode of governing in the old world, contains those restrictions, as the result and dregs of the old *feudal system*; and wherever this mode exists, the principle must be the same; of which the unlimited, and in many cases, the undefined power of the bishop, and presiding elder is a specimen, which some have seen and severely felt." *Writings of Rev. L. Dow*, p. 545.

Again: On page 550, he says: "The Methodist mode of Church government is *the most arbitrary and despotic of any in America*, except the Shakers," &c.

We make the following quotation from one of the most popular writers in England, of the present day—a gentleman, by the way, whom no man can suspect of being unfriendly to Methodism:

“Nothing in the compass of literature can be at once more sharply logical, or more thoroughly unphilosophical than are Wesley’s reasonings in support of MINISTERIAL ABSOLUTISM, and in enforcing the duty of POPULAR SUBMISSIVENESS. With a heart that would have grieved to injure any man in the smallest matter, *he upheld a Church theory, on the ground of which* HERETICS IN TROOPS MIGHT CONSISTENTLY BE BURNED.”—*Wesleyan Methodism*, by Isaac Taylor, p. 257.

We make our last extract from a pamphlet, fresh from the press, entitled “*Strictures on Church Government*, by Rev. R. ABBEY, Nashville, Tenn., published by E. Stevenson and F. A. Owen, Agents for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1855.” We suppose that the *imprimatur* of the “Book Concern” would not be placed to a libel upon “our Episcopacy.” Let us, then, take the deposition of “the Rev. R. Abbey.” He says:

“Republicanism is equality with regard to government. But when a class or order of persons comes in with rights or privileges or duties over and above the rights and privileges of the community; when you have a *privileged class* [the italics are his] in whom some governmental rights inhere, of course, in so far as this principle obtains, be it much or little, it innovates the principle of pure Republicanism. Republicanism knows no *class* or *order* with inherent privileges.

“Now, what is the name of that ingredient in Church government which inheres in the ministry as a class distinct from laymen? The only name which lexico-

graphers and scientific writers on government give to this principle, is ARISTOCRACY. Then a Christian Church must be, in part at least, ARISTOCRATIC. If any man does not like that term, I cannot help it. If he does not know its meaning, I advise him to consult a dictionary. If the term offends his ear, then his ear is either mal-formed or mal-educated. Nothing can offend a healthy ear but an idea. A word cannot." p. 11.

Taking the reverend gentleman's advice, we turn to the Dictionary, and find the following:

"ARISTOCRACY, *n.* 1. A form of government in which the whole supreme power is vested in the principal persons of the State, or in a privileged order. 2. The nobility, or chief persons in a State." *Webster*.

We certainly admire the candor of this writer, in calling things by their right names. We rather guess that the American "*ear*" has been too thoroughly "*mal-formed*" or "*mal-educated*" under the influence of our happy commonwealth, ever to appreciate the peculiar harmony of that sound. We advise the reader to make the experiment, say the next *Fourth of July*. Let him, while his fellow citizens are celebrating that auspicious day with bonfires and illuminations, repeat "*aristocracy, aristocracy,*" a few dozen times, and see whether it will suit the metre of the "*star-spangled banner*." If he cannot "*make it go,*" let him forthwith call on some "*circuit rider,*" or "*presiding elder,*" to "*raise the tune.*" And if the music still grates, we advise him to call at once on some of the "*doctors*" of "*our Episcopacy*"—and they are neither few nor far between—and submit to an *auricular operation*. Then shall the "*divine right*" of this "*privileged class*"—this "*aristocracy*"—melt upon his *lympanum*

as sweetly as the strains of the harp of *Æolus*. At least, if it does not, "I cannot help it," says Mr. Abbey—nor can we. We can only advise; and if this "mal-formed or mal-educated" "ear" is so dull that it will not hear our advice, our skirts are clear. It will be seen that Mr. Abbey agrees with Mr. Johnson, in pronouncing the Methodist Church government "*an aristocracy*."

As to the clause in the resolution transferring "all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church in meeting houses, parsonages, &c., &c., to the contingent "Southern organization," which declares said resolution binding "*so far as*" it "*can be of force in the premises*," we answer that it *did* have "force in the premises," because this property is now owned by the Church, South, *in virtue of the passage of that resolution*. Originally, all this property was deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in 1844, that Church relinquished its title to it in favor of another organization known as the "Methodist Episcopal Church, South," provided such an organization should be established; and this latter organization now holds that property, we repeat, in virtue of that relinquishment.

But there were sundry "protests" filed to the principles on which this suit was decided. The "Louisville Conference" protested; "Mr. Elliott and others" protested! This all *sounds* very well; but what did it amount to? Nothing—absolutely nothing! If the Northern division had refused to relinquish its claim upon, and the Southern division had refused to accept, the dividend, on the humiliating terms on which it was made, *that* would have been a *sensible* "protest." No, Brother Hamill: Your Church, South, gained the suit;

but with it "our Episcopacy" gained an authentic exposition, which has been placed upon the judicial records of the country, and which ten thousand protests can never erase. We do not wonder at your zeal and ingenuity in attempting to ward off the odium which that decision fastens upon your ecclesiastical escutcheon. Like the blood of the murdered Duncan, on the fair hand of the Scottish queen, "all the perfumes of Arabia never can sweeten it." Your Episcopacy may well exclaim, as did an English nobleman when he received the news of the battle of Bunker's Hill, "*Another such a victory, and we are ruined.*"

Brother Hamill admits that the General Conference could have "become Socinian," "Presbyterian or Baptist," in "government and doctrine," if it had "chosen to do so," as Mr. Lord alleged; but then he says, "there is another *could* and another *would*, too, behind all this matter—that is, the *Annual Conferences could* have taken every one of the delegates on their return home, and tried and expelled them, and they would most certainly have done it too." Very well. It seems, then, that the *Churches could not* and *would not* have dared to do it. So that here is another aspect of Episcopacy—the process of "trying and expelling"—in which it "admits no constituents—and has no constituents." Whether a body of men, (the clergy,) acting in the capacity of a General Conference, would act the reverse in a State Conference, involves a draft upon human credulity, rather too heavy to be honored. In point of sovereignty, which takes precedence, the General or the State Conferences? To ask this question is to answer it. *Apropos*, we will here introduce another extract from

the opinion of the court. Judge NELSON says: "These travelling preachers represented the sovereign power of the government, and were responsible to no earthly tribunal for the mode and manner of its exercise. * * * As they might have constructed any number of separate and distinct organizations in their first fraternal association and effort in the fulfilment of this mission, accordingly as it might seem to them best, so was it equally in their power at any subsequent period of their labors. The power remained unchanged."—*Appendix to Prop. Case*, p. 12.

But the conclusions to which our brother arrives upon the first part of his article merit a moment's attention. He considers, *First*: That the Book Concern is a "holy charity." This we have not debated, nor is it involved in the issue between us. He might just as well have represented us as saying that the preaching of the gospel by Methodist ministers was anti-Republican because of their arbitrary appointments to their stations by the bishops. But his *second* conclusion is decidedly original. He says, "The principles in its (the Property Case) adjudication *demonstrate* that in all grand as well as minor movements in the Methodist Episcopal Church, *the laity exercise an all-controlling influence.*" And he arrives at this conclusion, too, after admitting in so many words, that so far as the "Property Case" was concerned, the pleadings of the lawyers and the decision of the court, which we had quoted, were true, to wit: That they "admit no constituents, and have no constituents!" Nay, he enters into an elaborate argument to prove, that the laity ought not to have any sort of control over that "holy charity." And yet its "adjudication *demon-*

strates [yes DEMONSTRATES] . . . that the laity exercise an *all-controlling influence!*" We have seen some specimens of logic in which a *may be* in the premises became a *must be* in the conclusion; but we never before saw it "*demonstrated*" how a *cypher* in the premises became an "all-controlling" numerical quantity in the conclusion. It will do to place in "Barnum's Museum" beside Bishop Taylor's grand discovery of "*truth without evidence.*" Speaking of Pedo-baptism, that astute divine says: "I think there is so much to be pretended against it (Pedo-baptism) which I believe to be the *truth*, that there is much more *truth* than *evidence* on our side!" So it seems that the Bishop's discovery is likely to serve "our Episcopacy" a very clever turn. Nor less remarkable is his *third* conclusion, to wit: "That the government of Methodism, in all respects in which *the Bible gives scope for human legislation*, is modelled as Mr. Choate says, *after our secular union.*" That is to say, after a lengthy review of a law suit, in which the whole polity of Episcopal Methodism was in evidence before the court, and in which it was decided that "the laymen of the Church have no part or connection with its governmental organization, *and never had*—that they (the preachers) comprise the embodiment of its power, *ecclesiastical and temporal*—that when assembled in General Conference according to the usages and discipline of the Church, they represent themselves, *and have no constituents,*"—our brother comes to the sage conclusion that "the government of Methodism . . . is modelled after our secular union!!" But comment upon this conclusion would be paying the understanding of the reader rather an equivocal compliment. We may safely leave this to the capacity of those who are competent to de-

cide which was baptized, Philip or the eunuch. How far "the Bible gives *scope* for human legislation," is a desideratum which Episcopacy ought to define. It would be interesting to know how far, and in what particulars, the *Divine Law* may be amended by the interposition of "*human legislation*."

MISCELLANEOUS.

The "miscellaneous" items in his article scarcely need a response. Mr. Wesley is the father of American Methodists; indeed the Methodist ministry did not presume to organize their Church *until he granted them the privilege*. Hence, we thought it perfectly legitimate to quote from his writings. The "madmen of Munster," as they have been called, sustain no such relation to Baptists, *and never did*. They were composed, as we have proved, of Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, and "the larger portion," says Buck, "having no religious principles."


It is far easier to class us with Campbellites, is it not, Bro. Hamill, than to answer our argument on the subject of "creeds?" We still maintain that "human creeds may, as mere matters of convenience, make pretty good *servants*, but most intolerable *masters*."

It seems, then, that "inveighing against the doctrine of our church" is not a crime of sufficient magnitude to exclude one from the communion table of the Methodist Episcopal Church, although, if persisted in, it is a sufficient ground of exclusion from the Church. The Methodist Church is, therefore, more sacred than the table of the Lord!—since the man who would be excluded from the one would be admitted to the other—"immoral conduct" being the only ground of exclusion from the latter.

As to the error of which our brother supposes he has convicted us, we have only to say, that if we erred, the Book of Discipline is responsible. In answer to the question: "What shall be the business of the Quarterly Conference?" the answer is: "To hear complaints and to receive and try appeals." And since the "fifth restrictive rule" guaranties to the members the privilege "of trial before the Society, or by a committee, *and of an appeal*," we really supposed the tribunal to which the appeal was made, was competent to redress the wrong. And we really supposed that when Mr. Harding appealed to the General Conference, in 1844, he did it in the hope of being reinstated. Now, suppose the Quarterly Conference restores a private member after his exclusion, what relation does he sustain to the Church? Our statement was substantially true, that the Quarterly, Annual, and General Conferences could try, suspend, or expel members—if ministers are members. The jurisdiction of the Quarterly Conference is confined to private members and local preachers—that of the Annual and General Conferences, to the travelling clergy. As these two latter bodies "admit no constituents," of course they cannot permit such small matters to come up before their august deliberations.

But our brother says that *we*, the pastor of a Baptist Church, have more power in the trial of a member, than *he*, the pastor of a Methodist Church. Now, what is the meaning of the following question and answer, in the Discipline, page 55, last edition:

Quest. 1. What are the duties of the elder, deacon, or preacher, who has the special charge of a circuit or station?



Ans. 5. To receive, try, and expel members, according to the form of the Discipline.*

We humbly submit, that if *we* were to undertake this summary process in the Church in Tuskegee, about the first expulsion would be the *pastor*.

"The sad anarchy and confusion, called Baptist Church government," to which our brother has so often referred, is, it seems, the *argumentum ad hominem*, since it proves, that if our government is Republican, his is more so! It is well that our brother added "*tastes will differ*." We propose giving an illustration of this, for his special edification. The following anecdote is as well authenticated as any which has descended to us from the illustrious statesman and patriot to whom it refers. It was originally communicated to the "*Christian Watchman*," several years ago, by the Rev. Dr. Fishback, of Lexington, Ky. We extract it from Dr. Reynolds' "*Church Polity*," page 227:

"MR. EDITOR: The following circumstance, which occurred in the State of Virginia, relative to Mr. Jefferson, was detailed to me by Elder Andrew Tribble, about six years ago, who since died, when ninety two or three years old. The facts may interest some of your readers. Andrew Tribble was the pastor of a small Baptist Church, which held its monthly meetings at a short distance from Mr. Jefferson's house, eight or ten years before the American Revolution. Mr. Jefferson attended the meetings of the Church for several months in succession, and after one of them asked Elder Tribble to go home and dine with him, with which he complied.

Mr. Tribble asked Mr. Jefferson how he was pleased with their Church government. Mr. Jefferson replied,

* See Appendix F.

that it had struck him with great force, and had interested him much; *that he considered it the only form of pure Democracy that then existed in the world*, and had concluded that it would be *the best plan of government for the American Colonies*. This was several years before the Declaration of Independence. To what extent this practical exhibition of religious liberty and equality operated on Mr. Jefferson's mind, in forming his views and principles of religious and civil freedom, which were so ably exhibited, I will not say."

THE CONTRAST.

We shall dispose of what Brother Hamill says in regard to our article entitled "THE CONTRAST," as briefly as possible. We have already examined the positions assumed by Mr. Choate, which Brother Hamill so frequently quotes in this part of his article, and have proved from the decision of the Court that they were untenable; and hence, if there be any credit due that decision, they are to be "ruled out" of this discussion. And whether the very modest pledge he has given, "that that '*Contrast*' SHALL BE numbered with the things that are 'twice dead and plucked up by the roots,'" will be seen in the sequel.

First: We have permitted Mr. Choate to state what he meant by the declaration quoted on the first point himself. But it is maintained that the preachers who composed the Conference of 1784, were elected to the ministry by the votes of the people! And this made them the representatives of the people for life, in every position they might choose to fill! If a Methodist Society recommends a young man to Conference, as pos-

sessing gifts and qualifications for the ministry of the Gospel, and the Conference accepts him, and he is by the action of that Conference, (for they, not the Society, are the ultimate tribunal to decide who shall be received into their fraternity,) recognized for life, as a member *ex-officio* of their body, we are asked to believe that this is equivalent to the frequent periodical elections of our representatives to our National and State Legislatures! But the kimbo arms, the arch smile, and askance gaze of the reader, which, being interpreted, means—"you don't say so?"—relieves us of the necessity of any further exposure of this draft upon his credulity.

Secondly: It is alleged in answer to the second point of our "Contrast," that the act of joining the Methodist Episcopal Church is a voluntary adoption of its government. And so when an American citizen voluntarily expatriates himself, and emigrates to Russia, he voluntarily adopts that form of government. But does this act of his make him a party to the original formation of the Russian government? And does it transform that Autocracy into a Republic? Yet this is the argument of our brother. Furthermore: Congress is governed by a written Constitution, adopted by a power superior to it—THE PEOPLE—whereas, the General Conference of travelling preachers is governed by a constitution adopted by themselves, and they recognize no superior power to themselves. Hence the fallacy of his argument in comparing a Conference with our National Congress.

Thirdly: The division of the Church in 1844, was an "essential change in its constitution," as much so as if they had destroyed its Episcopal element. And yet this "essential change" was not submitted to the action of

a single society of laymen in the Union. The bishops and travelling preachers decided the fate of that measure, from its *alpha* to its *omega*. The unity of a "General Conference jurisdiction," was no more nor less "intact" before the separation, than "all other departments of the Church." This we have proved from the judicial records of the country, beyond all cavil.

Fourthly: Judges of the United States Court are nominated by the President, who is elected every four years by the popular suffrage, and confirmed by the Senate, whose members are elected every six years. But why has he appealed to the Supreme Judges and the army and naval officers of the United States? Do they make the laws which govern this confederacy? Why did he not appeal to our Legislative Assemblies—the law-making powers of our State and National Government?—Echo answers, why?

Fifthly: We will let the Discipline answer our brother's argument on our fifth point. "Who shall attend the Annual Conference? Ans. All the *travelling preachers* who are in full connection, and those who are to be received into full connection." Discipline, pp. 39–40. "Who shall compose the General Conference, &c. Ans. 1. The General Conference shall be composed of one member for every fourteen members of each Annual Conference, to be appointed either by seniority or choice, at the discretion of such Annual Conference," &c. That is, "the travelling preachers comprise the embodiment of its power, ecclesiastical and temporal," as the Court affirmed: "Not a *modicum* of power was left elsewhere," says Johnson. And yet the State and General Conferences, composed of the *travelling preachers* and *their* re-

representatives, are wonderfully *analogous* to our National Congress, whose members are chosen by *the people* and *their* representatives! There is another thing that must be "numbered among those which are 'twice dead, and plucked up by the roots,'" before this can be swallowed—the *common sense* of mankind.

Sixthly: And is there any analogy between the Senate of the United States, chosen for six years, and responsible to "a constituency," and one recognized and appointed by their peers for life, and which "admits no constituents," and is "responsible only to themselves?" The Southern Baptist Convention is *not* a legislative body. It is a merely voluntary assemblage—and each State may send as many and as few delegates to it as it chooses. They do not pretend to interfere with Church polity, and therefore cannot infringe upon the rights of the Churches.

Our seventh, eleventh and fifteenth points are identical with our fifth, says Brother Hamill, and he refers us to his answer to that for his answer to these. Let us see: In our fifth item we alluded to the manner of electing the members of our State and National legislatures. In our seventh we alleged that the members so chosen, represented and were responsible to "a constituency," in contradistinction to Methodist Conferences, which "had no constituents." In our eleventh, we showed the combination of the Democratic and Republican elements in our civil government, both of which were wanting in "our Episcopacy." And in our fifteenth, we referred to the effort made by sundry memorialists in 1824 and 1828, to make the Methodist Episcopal Church government REPRESENTATIVE, by which it could have been some-

what assimilated to the form of a free government; but that the dignitaries of that Church rebuked the memorialists in as offensive terms as ever fell from the lips of a despot: "Pardon us if we know no such rights, if we comprehend no such privileges." Whether these several points are identical, and whether they are "twice dead, and plucked up by the roots," may be safely referred to the judicious reader.

Eighthly: We supposed Bishop Hamline spoke *ex officio*, when he said that the will of the bishop, presiding elder, or circuit rider, "was omnipotent in the premises"—that "there was no tribunal to cure his errors or rectify his wrongs," and that the aggrieved party "must submit." We will, therefore, station ex-Bishop Hamline to guard that tree from the ruthless hand of our brother. We rather surmise that the ex-bishop will give him a little trouble before he succeeds in "plucking it up by the roots."

Ninthly: We may imitate the example of Bro. Hamill, and refer the reader to our answer to his strictures on our first point, for an answer to this, begging only to introduce the following extract from an article which appeared in the "Philadelphia Church Advocate," an able Methodist organ, and which is from the pen of a distinguished Methodist writer. "In the Methodist Episcopal Church, no one, except the travelling preacher, has any rights. All that the local preachers, exhorters, class-leaders, and private members possess, are mere privileges, for which they are indebted to the sovereign will and pleasure of their 'DIVINE RIGHTS' rulers."

Tenthly: Did the Memorialists, in 1824 and 1828, simply ask the privilege of "scattering their preachers

to the four winds?" Let the seventy-five thousand Protestant Methodists of the United States answer.

Twelfthly: We are not aware that "protests" can change facts. We can well conceive how "leading men in the Church, North," should "protest" against the decision of the court, for they lost nearly half a million of dollars by it. But that the party who gained the suit, should "protest" against the principles on which it was decided, and upon which alone it could have been determined in their favor, and yet accept the dividend, would place "our Episcopacy" in a humiliating attitude which would disarm contempt.

Thirteenthly: All the "standards" of "our Episcopacy" uniformly refer to John Wesley as the sole founder of Methodism in Europe and America. See section first of the Discipline. We also refer the reader to that part of this article, in which we have shown in what respects the Convention that formed our Federal Constitution, was analogous to the Conference that formed the "Book of Discipline," as alleged by Mr. Choate, to wit: That the bodies of each did their work and then disappeared.

Fourteenthly: Bishop Bascom shall vindicate this point for us. In his "Declaration of Rights," drawn up during the agitation of the "representative" question in the Methodist Episcopal Church, he says: "A government uniting the legislative, judicial, and executive powers in the same men, is an absurdity in theory, and in practice, tyranny. The executive power in every government, should be subordinate to the legislative, and the judicial independent of both. Whenever, therefore, it happens that these three departments of government are in the hands of the same body of men, and

these men not the representatives of the people, first making the laws, then executing them, and finally, the sole judges of their own acts, THERE IS NO LIBERTY, the people are virtually enslaved, and liable to be ruined at any time." Art 6th.

Sixteenthly: We asserted in this item that all the powers, in the governmental economy of Methodism, were in the hands of the clergy. And if we have not succeeded in proving this, we should despair of proving that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. "The bishop appoints the minister," says a Methodist writer, over twenty years ago, and we presume it is the same now; "the minister appoints the class-leader and stewards; these appoint the sexton, who, in his turn, appoints the grave-digger. So that from him who soars aloft, and overlooks God's heritage, down to him who delves in the earth, and buries the bodies of the saints, all derive their power from the ministry, and all are responsible to them only, for their proceedings." Quoted in the Iron Wheel, p. 313.

Our seventeenth item needs no defence. Every deed to Meeting Houses, &c. &c., is taken in the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Discipline, p. 209. Every trustee is originally appointed by the preacher in charge, or presiding elder, and must be a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Discipline, p. 218. Every vacancy by death or otherwise, in the boards, is to be filled by the nominee of the "stationed minister or preacher." *Idem*. When these facts are denied, we will publish the "form of a deed" laid down in the Discipline.

Has brother Hamill succeeded, reader, in *killing* with

a *double death*, these "trees of" *un*-*"righteousness"* in the Methodist vineyard, according to his *modest* boast? Now, we frankly confess, that, if we had planted them there, it would be a bare question of relative power between him and ourself as to whether they should remain. But as they were planted there by the "fathers," of "our Episcopacy," it materially changes the parties to the contest. We hope he will succeed ultimately in "plucking them up by the roots," and "casting them into the fire." The travelling clergy of the whole United States have them under special guardianship; and not until our brother shall associate with himself a power which the laity of his Church only can supply, will he be able to root up this noxious growth.

But to drop the figure, we maintain that every one of our seventeen points is sustained by evidence which is incontestible. Every fact which they respectively involve, we have proved, either from the "standards" of Methodism, or from the judicial records of the country. We are only responsible for grouping them together in the form in which they are there presented. Brother Hamill does not deny a single fact there presented. He only excepts to the principles on which "the Property Case" was decided; and in this, he becomes the antagonist of the Circuit Court of the United States, AND NOT OURS; and in this position we leave him, so far as his effort at "killing" and "plucking up" is concerned.

A word in regard to this allusion to Baptist Church government. He premises his strictures upon our "contrast" by saying, that "The Bible contains all the doctrines and essential principles of discipline which

govern gospel Churches." Then how is it, that those who adopt the Bible as their constitution—their ONLY rule of faith and practice,—are represented by him as adopting a "system of sad anarchy and confusion, called Baptist Church governments"—as possessing a "disjointed scheme, yclept Baptist Church government?" Was the very form of government adopted by the Apostolic Churches, a "disjointed system" of "anarchy and confusion?" Verily, it requires no little temerity to assert this. But if not; if the Apostolic Churches really had something which could be accurately called Church government, and a denomination of Christians in this day adopt it as theirs, by what system of logic can it be proved now to be a "system of anarchy and confusion?" Or is it impossible for Baptists to understand as plain a book as the New Testament? This will not be pretended; and we conclude, therefore, that the form of government adopted by Christ himself, and his Apostles who wrote as moved upon by the Holy Ghost, is far preferable, to that despotic "scheme yclept" Methodist Episcopacy, adopted under a special dispensation from John Wesley, by sixty travelling preachers in 1784.

We are glad that our brother has signified his willingness, heartily to co-operate with us in publishing in book form, this discussion. We hereby agree to furnish one-half of the expense necessary for the publication of say four thousand copies, more or less, so soon as Bro. Hamill or his brethren shall furnish the other half. We suppose it will be as readily bought by Methodists as

Baptists; and if so, there will be no difficulty in disposing of four thousand copies in six months after it is printed. At least we are willing to take two thousand copies, and become responsible for their sale, so far as the Baptists are concerned; and we have no reason to doubt that Brother Hamill will do the same in behalf of his brethren. In the event that an equitable arrangement can be consummated between us, in regard to its joint publication, we will cheerfully agree to leave out our articles now in course of preparation, on "Church Government;" albeit, we cannot see what very great harm it would do our Methodist brethren to read them.

We heartily reciprocate all the kind terms in which our brother holds us. We can say most seriously that we have not "set down aught in malice." We have spoken plainly, but kindly, as becomes all who profess godliness. And whether "our Episcopacy" shall prove in the issue to be a transplant from Jerusalem or Babylon, whether it shall prove to be an offshoot of the tree of liberty, or the green ivy which mistaken hands have planted at its root, and which is ultimately to enfold and crush within its deadly embrace that majestic tree, we can but wish the highest degree of temporal and spiritual prosperity to our worthy antagonist in this discussion.

November 8, 1855.

LETTER FROM MESSRS. CLOPTON, BILBRO, AND
MAYES.

REV. SAMUEL HENDERSON:

Dear Brother—At the close of the communication concluding on your part, the discussion between yourself and our pastor, Rev. E. J. Hamill, you address to the undersigned a respectful communication, to which we feel it is our duty to reply. In consequence of the republication in your columns, of an article from the *Western Watchman*, reflecting directly upon the economy of the Methodist Church, not in a religious, but in a political point of view, and thus, indirectly, upon the patriotism of the members of the Methodist Church, we felt that self-respect, as well as attachment to the Church of our choice, called upon us to ask at your hands admission into your columns, of a defense prepared by the pastor of our Church, against the malignant aspersions cast upon Methodism, by the anonymous author of the article in question. It was not the intention of our pastor to have carried the matter beyond that *expose* of the principles of the Methodist Church government to which our names were appended, had you not seen proper, a right we by no means question, to enter the arena and contend that the Methodist Church government was anti-Republican. In this aspect of things, we had a right to expect from our pastor, and were convinced of his ability to prepare a defense

of our Church economy. We have read the discussion with interest, and were much gratified with the ability and Christian kindness with which it was conducted. We are pleased to bear testimony to the fact that in our opinion it will tend to draw more closely, and not to sever, the bond of Christian union, which should exist between the two Churches. We congratulate both parties to this debate upon this happy result of the discussion; and we greatly desire to see it published in book form, that it may do good more extensively, by a wider circulation in both Churches. We will cheerfully enter into any arrangements which can be made, to secure its publication and promote its increased circulation.

We are indebted to you for the courtesies extended to our pastor, and for the kind regards you have expressed for him and for ourselves.

Respectfully yours,

DAVID CLOPTON,

JOHN B. BILBRO,

ROBT. L. MAYES.

Tuskegee, Ala., Nov. 2, 1855.

ANSWER.

The foregoing communication was handed in last week, but owing to the great length of the closing articles of the discussion, it was crowded out. It is in response to a note we addressed to the gentlemen whose names are signed to it, some two months since, at what

we then supposed, from the long silence of Bro. Hamill, was the end of the discussion between us. And let us here say to our Methodist brethren, that we never have, and God forbid that we ever should, seek to deprive any man or set of men, the right to adopt any form of Church government they please. But when such form is adopted by them—there is a co-relative right belonging to others—and that is the right to discuss its principles. But the abstract right to adopt Episcopacy, or to live under an Episcopal government, is one thing, and the right to call such a government a Democratic Republic, is quite a different thing. When, therefore, we chose to exercise a “right which” you “by no means question,” to investigate the claims of your ecclesiastical polity to Republicanism, we did so for the sole purpose of showing that a government by the clergy was *not* a government by the people; that whatever civil rights and privileges were guarantied to the laity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by our free government—Episcopacy “knew no such rights, and comprehended no such privileges.” And we do honestly maintain, that so long as Methodists uphold their present governmental organization, so long do they practically and theoretically repudiate, in their ecclesiastical capacity, the spirit and genius of American Democracy. And if their worthy pastor has succeeded in proving to their satisfaction, that their “Church economy,” every department of which is administered by the clergy—which “has no constituents”—which refuses to place grave questions “at the feet of a Democracy”—which is “absolutely an aristocracy”—is, nevertheless, quite Democratic and Republican—all we have to say is, they are far more

easily satisfied with religious than with civil polity. We suppose if we should undertake to prove to them, that a political compact, organized upon the identical principles of Episcopal Methodism, was quite homogeneous with our free institutions, they might indeed concede that we were honest at heart, but certainly not a very safe expounder of Democracy and Republicanism. For example, suppose our revolutionary war had proved a failure, and the colonies had been reduced to a state of servitude again to the British crown, would any rational man ever have suspicioned Episcopal Methodism as possessing the first element either of Democracy or Republicanism? With what exultation and pride would they, in such an event, have pointed to the part which their illustrious founder, John Wesley, and his first missionaries to this country took in that memorable struggle, in denouncing our forefathers as rebels, and affirming that they had no just cause to take up arms against their sovereign! Indeed, their *preachers at least* might have secured as high a commendation from GEORGE III. as the Baptists *did* from GEORGE WASHINGTON.

For the kind terms in which these brethren speak, both of the ability and spirit of the discussion, we are much obliged. They live in the immediate community in which it has occurred—have read it all—and are therefore prepared to speak understandingly. But how different has it been viewed by some of the accredited organs of their Church! By these we have been alternately denounced during its progress, as being guilty of “the lowest piece of religious demagogueism which has yet transpired”—as “a legitimate child of the father of lies”—as “ignorant of the subject” we were discussing

—as “accuser of the brethren”—as uttering “self-evidently malicious misrepresentations,” &c. &c. Now, these brethren declare in their communication: “We have read the discussion with interest, and were much gratified with the *ability* and *Christian kindness* with which it was conducted.” In this instance, at least, we must invert the sentiment of the poet, and say:

“’Tis distance lends” *repulsion* “to the view!”

Being desirous, when the discussion first opened, that “it might do good more extensively by a wider circulation in both Churches,” than our paper could give it, we requested Bro. Hamill to secure its publication in some one of the “Advocates,” as an act of reciprocal courtesy, and we are quite sorry that he failed in the effort. This desire has not abated in the slightest degree; and we are ready to negotiate any equitable arrangement, by which its “increased circulation” may be promoted.

We assure these brethren, that the courtesy we have extended to their pastor has been quite cordial from first to last; a courtesy, by the way, which we never have known extended to a Baptist by any one of the “Advocates.” But a few weeks since, a violent assault was made upon Dr. BAKER, a Baptist minister of Georgia, in the columns of the “Nashville Christian Advocate,” by a Mr. MILLS, a Methodist clergyman, to which Dr. Baker made a respectful reply, asking the editor of that paper to insert it, and this act of justice was denied him! Even while we write, we observe a similar instance of injustice on the part of the “Texas Christian Advocate.” The treatment we have received at the hands of these

"Advocates" is too well known to our readers, to be more than alluded to here. We know of no political editor of the Union, whose policy is governed by such a code of morals. The *surveillance* of a "star chamber," or a French "Emperor," was never more rigid and proscriptive than that which keeps watch and ward over the columns of these journals, and assumes to denounce every attempt to expose the polity of their denomination, not agreeable to them, as impertinent and uncharitable. With this, however, we have nothing to do—only to pursue the course exactly the reverse of theirs. Indeed we wish no better evidence that we are right than this. Our convictions of duty and justice are prescribed in a "book of discipline" which, so far from holding the penalty of exclusion *in terrorem* over us for "inveighing against the doctrines and discipline" of any denomination, which we believe unfounded in the Word of God, commands us to "prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good." Hence "the courtesies extended" to their pastor, and "the kind regards" we have expressed for them individually, is the result, not so much of personal esteem (although we are not wanting in this) as of *Christian principle*—and we claim no thanks for either.

November 15th, 1855.

LETTER VII.

THE DISCUSSION.

Three errors of fact; Their correction requested.

BROTHER HENDERSON:

There are several grave errors of fact, not of opinion, in your last article. As that article closes the discussion, I do not offer you a reply; but simply state the errors in question, with the conviction that you will do us justice, in the points specified.

First error of fact: In your examination of my review of the contrast, under the third head, you say of the division of the Church in 1844, "This essential change in the constitution of the Church, was not submitted to the action of a single society of laymen in the Union."

Now, it is unaccountable to me, how you could have fallen into this error, upon a fact of such vital importance to the question under discussion. I had repeatedly called your attention to the fact, that the laity of the entire South demanded the division. I had quoted Mr. Fancher's remark, "that the most excited meetings soon occurred in all parts of the South, and the most indignant resolutions were passed." I had referred to the fact, that the Rev. Mr. Curry, a distinguished minis-

ter of the Georgia Conference, was required to vacate his charge of the Columbus Church, by the members, on account of his opposition to the action of that Church, on the question of the division; and, moreover, the report of the Church Property Case abounds with such testimony. For example, in an "Address to the ministers and members of the slave-holding States," drawn up before they left New York, by the very delegates to the General Conference of 1844, who proposed the plan of separation, they say: "The plan does not decide that division shall take place; but simply, and it is thought securely, provides that it may, if it be found necessary. Of this necessity, you (the ministers *and members*) are to be the judges."

Again, in the proceedings of the South Carolina Conference, p. 113, it is said: "Resolutions to that effect (namely, the division of the Church) have been adopted by the Quarterly Conferences of all the circuits and stations without any exception, and in many, perhaps in most of them, by other meetings also, which have been called expressly for the purpose; and in some of them, *by meetings held at every preaching place where there was a society*. In the whole field of our Conference district, one individual only has been heard to express himself doubtfully as to the expediency of a separate jurisdiction."

Again, in the address to the Louisville Convention of the Methodist Church, South, which sums up the action of our entire Conferences, and *membership*, it is declared, "It was found that both as to the members of the Annual Conferences, *and the local ministry and membership of our entire territory*, the declaration had been sustained,

and a separate organization called for, by as great a majority as ninety-five to five—that the number dissenting should have been so small, compared, to the number of those *who have required us to act*, is to our minds conclusive proof of the absolute necessity of this action.” Church Property Case, p. 121. Of the truth of the fact, that the laity did take action upon the question of the division of the Church, there are *living witnesses by thousands*.

You surely could not have read the entire report of the Church Property Case. Had you read these extracts from it, which I now quote, it would have been impossible for you to have fallen into so great an error, upon so fundamental a point. Of course, this correction of your error should materially change your opinion of Methodism.

Second error of fact: “You say the preachers and elders appoint all the class-leaders, stewards, and trustees who hold Church property—and preachers remove at their pleasure their appointees.” You are right with regard to the appointment and removal of class-leaders, though this discretionary power of the preacher is held under strict accountability; but you are wrong about trustees and stewards. A new board of trustees may be appointed by preachers, where the laws allow it; but old boards of trustees fill their own vacancies by election, and trustees and stewards are accountable to the Quarterly Conferences only, and cannot be removed by either the preacher or the presiding elder.

Third error of fact: You quote Isaac Taylor as one, whom “no man can suspect of being unfriendly to Methodism.” Hear the Methodist Quarterly Review, of

July, 1853, of his work: "On almost every page, under an ill-disguised affectation of candor, his secret enmity may be discovered. This is a sufficient exposure of the hypocritical enmity with which he praises the heart of Wesley, as incapable of injuring any man in the smallest matter, while he charges him with upholding a Church theory, on the ground of which heretics in troops might consistently be burned."

Your own sense of honor, and of justice, will dictate to you the propriety of correcting these errors of fact.

I am, as ever, your brother in Christ,

E. J. HAMILL.

November 22, 1855.

P. S.—The Fourth Quarterly Conference of the Oak Bowery circuit, Chambers county, passed resolutions unanimously recommending the publication of the discussion.

Signed,

JONATHAN WARE, Sec'y.

The Fourth Quarterly Conference of the Tuskegee circuit, of which the Rev. Wm. B. Neal is pastor, passed similar resolutions recommending the publication of the discussion.

Signed,

P. B. APPLEBY, Sec'y.

REPLY TO LETTER VII.

Misapprehension of argument; The "first error of fact" may be corrected when the "standards" are mended, and the judicial records of the country rectified; Second "error of fact;" Third "error of fact;" The "seventh wonder;" Mutual call for the publication of the discussion by Baptists and Methodists.

We very cheerfully insert the foregoing communication from our worthy antagonist in the late discussion on Episcopal Methodism. Far be it from us to persist in "*errors of fact*," in reference to Episcopacy; especially such "errors of fact" as should materially change our opinion of Methodism." The reader will be able to judge how far these "errors" may be legitimately charged to our account, at the close of this article.

In regard to the "first error of fact" we think that if Brother Hamill had fully comprehended the drift of our argument on the "Property Case," it would have "materially changed his opinion" of the "error" in question. In that argument, we took it for granted, that the principles on which that case was decided by the learned tribunal to which it was referred, were true in their application to the whole system of Methodism. At least, so thought the Court. These principles were, as argued by the counsel who gained the suit, and as sustained by the Court in its decision, that the General Conference of

travelling preachers "admit no constituents"—that they "have the power to create and destroy"—that "not a *modicum* of power is left elsewhere"—and, to use the very language of the judges who decided the suit, when they (these travelling preachers) are assembled in General Conference, according to the *usages and discipline of the Church, they represent themselves, and have no constituents.*"

Our position is, *That the laity in the Methodist Episcopal Church, have, in a governmental sense, no power whatever.* And our review of the "Property Case" was intended to sustain this position. Now, the only legitimate mode of proving that we committed an error in saying that the division of the Church, by the General Conference in 1844, "was not submitted to the action of a single society of laymen in the Union," is to appeal to the action of that body, in making that "essential change in its constitution." Pursuing this course, we turn to the original resolutions passed by that body in 1844, providing for a division of the Church. If we had the space we would publish the whole series; but we have room for only the fourth, which covers the whole ground in debate between us. It is as follows:

"4th. That whenever the *Annual Conferences*, by a vote of three-fourths of all *their members* voting on the third resolution, (which provided for a "change of the sixth restrictive rule," so as to authorize an equitable division of "the Book Concern and chartered Fund,") shall have concurred in the recommendation to alter the sixth restrictive article, the agents at New York and Cincinnati shall, and they are hereby authorized and directed to deliver over to any authorized agent or

appointee of the Church, South, should one be authorized, all notes and book accounts against the ministers, Church members, or citizens within its boundaries, with authority to collect the same for the sole use of the Southern Church, and that said agents also convey to the aforesaid agent, or appointee, of the South, all the real estate, and assign to him all the property, including papers, stock, and all right and interest connected with the printing establishments at Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, which now belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church."

Now, observe distinctly, That the authority which is to give force and effect to those resolutions—resolutions which contemplate the most "essential change" in Methodism which has ever occurred in its history—is, *not the societies of laymen and local preachers, for they are never named in such connection, BUT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES OF BISHOPS AND TRAVELLING PREACHERS.* And this authority is distinctly submitted to them in the first, third, fourth and fifth resolutions passed by that body. *They are the only constituents authorized to act in the premises.* We care not if there were five hundred or five thousand "excited meetings held in the South" on that subject—we care not how many "addresses" were submitted "to the ministers and members of the slave-holding States," by the members of the Conference of 1844, *on their individual responsibility, and after that body adjourned.* The question is, *Whether the General Conference of 1844, in passing the resolutions providing for a division of the Church, RECOGNIZED IN THE LAITY an authority competent to sit in judgment upon its acts and doings?* Prove this to us, Brother Hamill, and we will cheerfully and

candidly acknowledge, that we committed an error in saying that "this essential change was not submitted to the action of a single society of laymen in the Union." The most careless reader, it seems to us, must have understood us to mean, in that sentence, that societies of laymen, in the language of the Court, "have no part or connection with its governmental organization, and never had"—that General Conferences do not "submit" their acts to the decision of laymen, in any sense of that term—and that in the case to which we referred, the tribunal which was to give force and effect to the resolutions was, NOT THE LAITY, *but the bishops and travelling preachers, in their Annual Conference capacity.* The *privilege* of holding public meetings to *acquiesce in*, and *submit* to the action of their rulers, is one thing, and the RIGHT to vote upon a vital question of Church organization, *as recognized constituents*, is quite a different thing. We think we could even appeal to Brother Hamill to make this distinction.

Our brother thinks, of course, this correction of your (our) error should materially change your (our) opinion of Methodism. About as much, Bro. Hamill, as the recent public meetings in France and England, by which the loyalty of the people in these nations was expressed to their respective Sovereigns for the manner in which they are prosecuting the war with Russia, would "change our opinion" of monarchy. Whenever your General Conference shall recognize, *in the laity*, a constituency, an authorized tribunal to "cure its errors and rectify its wrongs"—whenever that body shall, in the plenitude of its condescension, "place grave questions at the feet of a Democracy"—THAT will "materially change our

opinion of Methodism." But until this is done, the "excited meetings," "Mr. Curry," "addresses" from delegates to "General Conferences," and "Conventions," may be multiplied fourfold—we must persist in saying, that the General Conference of 1844 did not submit the resolutions which provided for a contingent division of the Church, "to the action of a single society of laymen in the Union," to give them effect. That body "knew no such rights, and comprehended no such privileges." We are sorry, therefore, that we cannot accommodate our brother in this matter, small as it is. "Retract!" No; not until the "Book of Discipline" is mended, and the judicial records of the country are corrected.*

The "second error of fact" can be disposed of quite easily. In saying that the preachers and elders appoint all the class-leaders, stewards and trustees, who hold Church property, we stated a "substantial truth, with circumstantial variations," as our law books would say. The class-leaders, and trustees are appointed by the preacher in charge; and in case of a vacancy by death,

* The above correction of the first great error of fact, I do not deem sufficient—but the facts are before the public. I submit to their decision.

E. J. HAMILL.

We regret this. As our defence of the position, involving what is called "the first great error of fact," is based upon evidence derived from *official* documents, emanating from the General Conference and the judicial records of the country, we cannot believe that the reader will be as incredulous as our worthy opponent. We, therefore, most cheerfully join in submitting the whole matter to the same enlightened umpire.

EDITOR S. W. BAPTIST.

removal, or otherwise, in boards of trustees, as stated in the latter part of the same article, the preacher nominates and the board confirms. Stewards are nominated by the "preacher having charge of the circuit," and "confirmed or rejected by the Quarterly Conference." (Discipline, p. 218.) Not wrong about trustees, Brother Hamill. "Old boards of trustees can fill their own vacancies," *provided they vote for the nominee of the preacher*. See Discipline, p. 218. The only "error" we committed was in classing stewards with class-leaders and trustees; and this was not an error if the old legal maxim be true, *quid facit per alium, facit per se*: what a man does through another, he does himself. And besides all this, Bro Hamill does not pretend that the societies of laymen have any hand in these appointments. And this was the point we were establishing in making that statement.

The "third error of fact" admits a still easier solution. We did not quote from Isaac Taylor, as one of the "standards" of Methodism, but as an English writer of accredited standing and ability. Any man who will read the volume from which we quoted, must be impressed with the conviction, that while he totally disagrees with Mr. Wesley and his followers, on their ecclesiastical polity, he nevertheless held them in high respect. Perhaps Mr. Taylor, like Judges Nelson and Betts, and all other outsiders who have attempted to look into the "mystery of Methodism," *did not understand the subject*. "Our Episcopacy" must be the "seventh wonder of the world," as neither the judiciary of the country, nor lawyers, nor scholars, nor indeed any of the rest of mankind who belong to the uninitiated, can understand it. It seems there must be something in the system

which *stultifies* the intellect of every man who undertakes to analyze it. His perceptions may be as clear as the noon day's sun upon every other question, but here, a "horror of great darkness" instantly encompasses him! His reasonings "may be *true* in their application" to all other subjects, "but *false* in their application" to this! Now, really, we must be pardoned for throwing out the suggestion, that the fruitless searches which have been made for the "Democratic element" in Episcopal Methodism, is not so much from the *want of sight to detect it*, as from the *want of the material in the system*.

We are gratified that two other "Quarterly Conferences" have expressed their approbation of the discussion, and their desire for its publication. Between fifteen and twenty Baptist Associations in this State, representing "constituency" of about forty thousand, have called on us to publish it.

November 22, 1855.



A P P E N D I X .



APPENDIX.

A.

Referred to in pages 77 and 124.

MR. WESLEY'S "CALM ADDRESS TO OUR AMERICAN COLONIES."

In the current histories of *American Methodism*, it is confidently asserted of those Methodist preachers who became so offensive to the patriots of our glorious Revolution, by "avowing their attachment to the British cause;" that they acted "*contrary to the advice of Mr. Wesley.*"—See *Gorrie's History of Episcopal Methodism, as it was and is*," Sec. 3, p. 52. That the reader may determine what amount of credit is due to this statement, we propose presenting a few extracts from Mr. Wesley's "*Calm Address to our American Colonies*," written at the time that our forefathers were hunted down like wild beasts in the swamps and morasses in the South, and marking the ground with the blood of their unshod feet in the bleak winters of the North. Of that sacred cause, to maintain which, these noble men "pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor," the father of American Methodism holds the following language:

"3. But I object to the very foundation of your plea that 'every freeman is governed by laws to which he has consented;' as confidently as it has been asserted, *it is absolutely false*. In wide extended dominions, a very small part of the people are concerned in making the laws. This, as all public business, must be done by delegation, the delegates are chosen by a select number. And those that are not electors, who are far the greater part, stand by, idle and helpless spectators. * * * * *

"4. But you say, you 'are entitled to life, liberty, and property, by nature; and that you have never ceded to any sovereign power the right to dispose of these without your consent.'

"While you speak as the naked sons of nature, this is certainly true; but you presently declare—'Our ancestors at the time they settled these Colonies, were entitled to all the rights of natural born subjects within the realm of England.' This, likewise is true; but when this is granted, the boast of original rights is at an end; you are no longer in a state of nature, but sink down to Colonists governed by a Charter. If your ancestors were subjects, they acknowledged a sovereign; if they had a right to English privileges, they were accountable to English laws, and had *caded* to the king and parliament, *the power of disposing, without their consent, of both their lives, liberties, and properties.* And did the parliament cede to them a dispensation from the obedience which they owe as natural subjects?—or any degree of independence not enjoyed by other Englishmen? * * * *

"6. But you say—'As the Colonists are not represented in the British parliament, they are entitled to a free power of legislation; for they inherit all the right which their ancestors had, of enjoying all the privileges of Englishmen.'

"They do inherit all the privileges which their ancestors had, but they can inherit no more. Their ancestors left a country where the representatives of the people were elected by men particularly qualified, and where those who wanted that qualification were bound by the decisions of men whom they had not deputed. You are the descendants of men who either had no votes, or resigned them by emigration. You have, therefore, exactly what your ancestors left you—not a vote in making laws, nor of choosing legislators, but the happiness of being protected by laws, and the duty of obeying them. * * * *

"7. However, the 'Colonies have a right to all the privileges granted them by the royal charters, or secured to them by provincial laws.'

"The first clause is allowed; they have certainly a right to all the privileges granted them by the royal charters. But as to the second, there is a doubt. Provincial laws may grant privileges to individuals of the province, but surely no province can confer provincial privileges on itself. They have the right to do all which the king has given them, but not to all which they have given themselves. * * *

* "8. All that impartially consider what has been observed, must readily allow, that *the English parliament has an UNDOUBTED right to tax all the English Colonies.*

"But whence, then, is all this hurry and tumult? Why is America all in an uproar?" Here the *reverend politician*, JOHN WESLEY, proceeds to give his "opinion" of the cause of this "uproar." He alleges that "a few men in England who are determined enemies to monarchy," are "seeking to erect their grand idol, their dear commonwealth, upon its ruins!" So that our noble revolutionary ancestry—Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Henry, Madison, and all their compatriots, were the mere *dupes* of "a few men in England!" and our glorious Republic is the result of the intrigues of these few "artful men!" After belaboring them with this insult to their patriotism and integrity, he proceeds:

"10. But, my brethren, would this be any advantage to *you*? Can *you* hope for a more desirable form of government, either in England or America, than that which you now enjoy? [This clause in the "Address" seems especially intended for his own brethren, and the emphasis he lays upon "*you*," as it is *italicised* by himself.] After all the vehement cry for liberty, what more liberty can you have? What more religious liberty can you desire, than that which you enjoy already? May not every one among you worship God according to his own conscience? What civil liberty can you desire which you are not already possessed of? Do you not sit without restraint, *every man under his own vine*? Do you not, every one, high or low, enjoy the fruit of your labor? This is real, rational liberty, such as is enjoyed by Englishmen alone, and not by any other people in the habitable world. Would the being independent of England make you more free? Far, very far from it. It would hardly be possible for you to steer clear between anarchy and tyranny. But suppose, after numberless dangers and mischiefs, you should settle into one or more Republics, would a republican government give you more liberty, either civil or religious? By no means. NO GOVERNMENTS UNDER HEAVEN ARE SO DESPOTIC AS THE REPUBLICAN: NO SUBJECTS ARE GOVERNED IN SO ARBITRARY A MANNER AS THOSE OF A COMMONWEALTH. * *

"11. 'But if we submit to one tax more will follow.' Perhaps so. and perhaps not. But if they did; if you were taxed (which is

out of kindness at least to the present generation, have concluded to hook them up, and rescue them from a fate to which their friends seem inclined to consign them. We quote from the Rev. ALEXANDER McCAINE'S "*History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy*," published in Baltimore, in 1827. Mr. McCaine was a preacher in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, "for upwards of thirty years."

The following is a copy of this letter, attested by Bishop White:

"RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

"Permit me to intrude a little on your time, upon a subject of great importance.

"You, I believe, are conscious that I was brought up in the Church of England, and have been ordained a presbyter of that Church. For many years I was prejudiced, even I think, to bigotry, in favor of it; but through a variety of causes and incidents, to mention which, would be tedious, and useless, my mind was exceedingly biased on the other side of the question. In consequence of this, I am not sure but I went further in the separation of our Church in America, than Mr. Wesley, from whom I had received my commission, did intend. He did indeed solemnly invest me, as far as he had a right so to do, with Episcopal authority, but did not intend, I think, that our entire separation should take place. He being pressed by our friends on this side the water, for ministers to administer the sacraments to them (there being very few clergy of the Church of England then in the States) *he went farther, I am sure, than he would have gone, if he had foreseen some events which followed.* And this I am certain of—that he is now sorry for the separation.

"But what can be done for a re-union, which I wish for; and to accomplish which, Mr. Wesley, I have no doubt, would use his influence to the utmost? The affection of a very considerable number of the preachers and most of the people, is very strong towards him, notwithstanding *the excessive ill usage he received from a few.* My interest also, is not small; and both his and mine would readily and to the utmost, be used to accomplish that (to us) very desirable object: if a readiness were shown by the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church to re-unite.

"It is even to your Church an object of great importance. We have now above 60,000 adults in our Society in these States; and

about 250 travelling ministers and preachers; besides a great number of local preachers, very far exceeding the number of travelling preachers; and some of these local preachers are men of very considerable abilities; but if we number the Methodists as most people number the members of their Church, viz.: by the families which constantly attend the divine ordinances in their places of worship, they will make a larger body than you possibly conceive. The Society, I believe, may be safely multiplied by five on an average, to give us our stated congregations; which will then amount to 300,000. And if the calculation, which I think some eminent writers have made, be just, that three-fifths of mankind are un-adult (if I may use the expression) at any given period, it will follow that all the families, the adults of which form our congregations in these States, amount to 750,000. About one-fifth of these are blacks.

"The work now extends in length from Boston to the south of Georgia; and in breadth, from the Atlantic to Lake Champlain, Vermont, Albany, Redstone, Holstein, Kentucky, Cumberland, &c.

"But there are many hindrances in the way. Can they be removed?

"1. Our ordained ministers will not, ought not, to give up their right of administering the sacraments. I don't think that the generality of them, perhaps none of them, would refuse to submit to a reordination, if other hindrances were removed out of the way. I must here observe, that between sixty and seventy only, out of the two hundred and fifty, have been ordained presbyters, and about sixty deacons (only). The presbyters are the choicest of the whole.

"2. The other preachers would hardly submit to re-union, if the possibility of their rising up to ordination depended on the present bishops in America. Because, though they are all, I think I may say, zealous, pious, and very useful men, yet they are not acquainted with the learned languages. Besides, they would argue, if the present bishops would waive the article of the learned languages, yet their successors might not.

"My desire of a re-union is so sincere and earnest, that these difficulties make me tremble: and yet something must be done before the death of Mr. Wesley, otherwise I shall despair of success: for though my influence among the Methodists in these States, as well as in Europe, is, I doubt not, increasing, yet Mr. Asbury, whose influence is very

capital, will not easily comply; nay, I know he will be exceedingly averse to it.

"In Europe, where some steps had been taken, tending to a separation, all is at an end. Mr. Wesley is a determined enemy of it, and I have lately borne an open and successful testimony against it.

"Shall I be favored with a private interview with you in Philadelphia? I shall be there, God willing, on Tuesday, the 17th of May. If this be agreeable, I'll beg of you just to signify it in a note, directed to me at Mr. Jacob Baker's, Merchant, Market Street, Philadelphia: or, if you please, by a few lines sent me by the return of the post, at Philip Rogers', Esq., in Baltimore, from yourself or Dr. Magaw: and I will wait upon you with my friend Dr. Magaw. We can then enlarge on the subjects.

"*I am conscious of it that secrecy is of great importance in the present state of the business, till the minds of you, your brother bishops, and Mr. Wesley be circumstantially known. I must, therefore beg that these things be confined to yourself and Dr. Magaw, till I have the honor of seeing you.*

"Thus, you see, that I have made a bold venture on your honor and candor, and have opened my whole heart to you on the subject as far as the extent of a small letter will allow me. If you put equal confidence in me, you will find me candid and faithful.

"I have, notwithstanding been guilty of inadvertencies. Very lately I found myself obliged (for the pacifying of my conscience) to write a penitential letter to the Rev. Mr. Jarrat, which gave him great satisfaction: ~~and for~~ the same reason I must write another to the Rev. Mr. Pettigrew.

"When I was last in America, I prepared and corrected a great variety of things for our magazine, indeed, almost everything that was printed, except some loose hints which I had taken of one of my journeys, and which I left in my hurry with Mr. Asbury, without any correction, entreating him that no part of them might be printed which could be improper or offensive. But through great inadvertancy (I suppose) he suffered some reflections on the characters of the two above mentioned gentlemen to be inserted in the magazine, for which I am very sorry; and probably shall not rest till I have made my acknowledgements more public; though Mr. Jarrat does not desire it.

"I am not sure, whether I have not also offended you, sir, by accepting one of the offers made me by you and Dr. Magaw, of the use of your Churches, about six years ago, on my first visit to Philadelphia, without informing you of *our plan of separation from the Church of England*. If I did offend (as I doubt I did, especially from what you said to Mr. R. Dallam, of Abington,) I sincerely beg your and Dr. Magaw's pardon. I'll endeavor to amend. But alas! I am a frail, weak creature.

"I will intrude no longer at present. One thing only I will claim from your candor—that if you have no thought of improving this proposal, you will burn this letter, and take no more notice of it (for it would be a pity to have us entirely alienated from each other, if we cannot unite in the manner my ardent wishes desire), but if you will further negotiate the business, I will explain my mind still more fully to you on the probabilities of success.

"In the mean time, permit me, with great respect, to subscribe myself, Right Rev. Sir, your very humble servant in Christ,

(Signed,)

THOMAS COKE.

The Right Reverend Father in God,

BISHOP WHITE.

Richmond, April 24th, 1791.

"P. S.—You must excuse interlineations, &c. I am just going into the country, and have no time to transcribe."

"The doctor having, in this letter, ~~proposed~~ ^{proposed} a 'private interview' with Bishop White, 'if agreeable,' ~~walked~~ ^{walked} on him upon his arrival at Philadelphia. The following extract of a letter from the bishop to one of his friends, contains the substance of the conversation which passed at the time between himself, Dr. Magaw and Dr. Coke."

"Philadelphia, July 30th, 1804.

"Reverend Sir:

"In the spring of the year, 1791, I received a letter from Dr. Coke, on the subject of uniting the Methodist Society with the Protestant Episcopal Church. An answer was returned. In consequence of which, Dr. Coke, on his coming to town, made me a visit, having not then received my letter, but having heard that I had written. Our conversation turned chiefly on the aforesaid subject. The general

outlines of Dr. Coke's plan were, a reordination of the Methodist ministers, and their continuing under the superintendence then existing, and on the practices of their peculiar institutions. There was also suggested by him, a propriety, but not a *condition made, of ADMITTING TO THE EPISCOPACY, HIMSELF AND THE GENTLEMAN ASSOCIATED WITH HIM* in the superintendence of the Methodist Societies. This intercourse was communicated at the time from Dr. Coke to Dr. Magaw. I do not know of any other person then informed of it, unless I may except the gentleman above alluded to, by whom, if I have been rightly informed, my letter to Dr. Coke was opened in his absence—such a freedom being understood, as I supposed, to arise out of the connection between the two gentlemen. But for this part of the statement I cannot vouch. It was understood between Dr. Coke and me, that the proposal should be communicated to the bishops of the Episcopal Church at the next Convention, which was to be in September, 1792, in New York. This was accordingly done. After which I perceived no use of further communication on the subject; and I have not since seen Dr. Coke, nor heard from him, nor written to him.

"It appears to me that the above comprehends either *explicitly* or by *implication*, all the points to which your letter leads. It would have been more agreeable to me, if no occasion of this testimony had occurred; and it is now given, merely to prevent the matter being understood otherwise than it really is.

"The above is what I have written to Mr. McClaskey, and I remain, &c. &c.

Your affectionate brother,

WILLIAM WHITE."

Some eight or nine years after the failure of the above overture, Dr. Coke made a similar one to the "Lord Bishop of London." In this letter to the bishop, an "interview" is sought by the doctor, provided his "lordship" would signify his willingness. To "some of his most intimate friends," he says, he "has ventured to disclose this plan" of effecting a union between the Methodist and the Episcopal Church, and that "it meets their decided approbation and cordial wishes for success;" and furthermore, says the doctor, "the Attorney-General, with whom I had the honor of being acquainted at

Oxford, approved of it," and "encouraged me to lay the whole at the feet of your lordship." "The plan" lies "at the feet of his lordship," we suppose, to this day; for he does not seem to have taken it from his footstool.

Before dismissing this topic, allow us to observe, that Dr. COKE made still a third effort for the bishopric. In 1813, he addressed a letter to "some of the most eminent and influential British statesmen," petitioning for Episcopal orders, and promising "*to renounce all connection with the Methodists, if the Prince Regent would only make him a bishop for India!*" About the same time he addressed a letter to Wilberforce, in which he engages, "In case of my appointment to the Episcopacy to India, [I shall] *return most fully and faithfully into the bosom of the Established Church*, and do every thing in my power to promote its interests." &c.—*Wilberforce Correspondence*, vol. ii, p. 114, *quoted in Paris' History of the Prot. Meth. Church*, p. 385. But alas, this overture also failed! None could be found to "pity the sorrows of the poor old man!"

Now, if the "Book of Discipline" of the Methodist Episcopal Church, speaks the *truth* in its first section, when it affirms that Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke to the Episcopal office, how comes it to pass that Dr. Coke applied to Bishop White, not only for his own consecration to that office, but for the ordination of a competent number of preachers in the Methodist connection, to administer the sacraments to the societies? If he were already a bishop, why did he not ordain these preachers? And why did he make three distinct overtures to secure Episcopal consecration? And yet the first chapter of the Methodist Discipline alleges that he was a bishop many years before either of these overtures were made!!

But perhaps Dr. Coke took the same view of his ordination by John Wesley, that the poet, Charles Wesley, did. The Methodist Hymn Book does not contain the following effusion of Charles, and it is, therefore, indebted to some other channel for having reached our generation. If it would not be considered impertinent, we would suggest that it constitute the *chorus* to the hymn usually sung at the ordination of bishops.

"So easily are bishops made,
By man's or woman's whim,
Wesley his hands on Coke hath laid,
BUT WHO LAID HANDS ON HIM?"

C.

Referred to in page 127.

The following communication, written for the 'South Western Baptist,' during the foregoing discussion, by a distinguished minister of Mississippi, so ably discusses the "Munster affair," that we beg leave to insert it here, instead of the article we promised on that subject.

EDITOR.

THE PEASANTS' WAR IN GERMANY.

Mr. Editor: As this subject has been alluded to, not only by the Rev. Messrs. Hamill and Ferguson, but also several times of late by others in different parts of the country, both in the pulpit and in public journals, I ask the opportunity of replying, through your columns, to the stereotyped charge founded upon it. Let me premise by saying that I have no wish to interfere, in the slightest degree, in the original subject of debate between Mr. Hamill and yourself; but as this subject forms merely a collateral issue, my remarks may not perhaps be considered either impertinent or irrelevant.

It was once observed by Curran, the great Irish Orator, as an apology for his excessive indulgence in the reading of romances, that they were about as truthful as most histories, and that they were certainly a great deal more entertaining. His own experience in public affairs, he said, had convinced him that only the great and prominent facts of history could be relied on, whilst the details, and especially the motives assigned for the conduct of princes and statesmen, were very frequently entirely unworthy of credit. Mr. Jefferson's very emphatic language about the untruthfulness of newspapers, will be remembered by most of the readers of Mr. Baldwin's late work. After making all due allowance for a little extravagance on the part of the eminent men referred to, it must be admitted, that the statements of partisan books as well as of partisan newspapers, must be received with many grains of allowance. Every school-boy has learned to talk of *Punica fides*, *Punic faith*; but it may well be doubted, whether if we had the Carthaginian account, we

should not be disposed to think the countrymen of Hannibal quite as faithful to their engagement as those of Scipio. Hear both sides, is a maxim whose justice will commend itself to every understanding. In judging of the political and religious parties that have existed in England, we have the means of applying this rule. Every man of education has the means of judging on the real merits and demerits of the Puritans and Cavaliers, the Whigs and Tories, the Catholics and Protestants. Hume, Lingard, Macaulay, Clarendon, Lucy Hutchinson, and many other writers are accessible to every historical student who has the necessary leisure and means. The different religious and political parties are represented by those writers, and we have the means of comparing their different statements, and thus judging for ourselves. Not so, however, with the German peasants and German Anabaptists. They, like the Carthaginians of old, have no one to speak in their behalf. If they could speak from their bloody graves, they might perhaps say a great deal in mitigation of the harsh judgment of posterity. Their tale has been told not by themselves, but by writers who belonged to the party of their conquerors. Less fortunate than the Scottish Covenanters, they have had no Dr. McCrie to come forward as their champion.

But let us look at the facts of the case, as they are presented by those who had no sympathies except those of our common humanity either with the peasants or the Anabaptists. The feudal system had long borne most heavily upon the lower classes throughout Europe. With the increasing luxury and magnificence of the princes, nobles, and gentry, its evils had become more and more aggravated. As the habits of the upper classes become more expensive, in the same proportion did their exactions become more intolerable. At the same time, Europe was beginning to awaken from her sleep of many long and dark centuries. The sun of modern civilization, after a long and gloomy night, had arisen above the horizon and begun to enlighten the nations. Some few scattered rays, at least, had penetrated the dark and cheerless abodes of poverty and ignorance. The humble classes began to ask themselves if their wretchedness and degradation formed a necessary part of the scheme of Providence, and if the existing state of things were essential to the existence of society. Their longing eyes anxiously sought some star of hope. They asked themselves with mingled feelings of hope and

despair: Is there no prospect of amelioration; must our miseries endure forever? More than a century before the beginning of the Reformation, and in the reign of Richard II., an insurrection of the lower classes, headed by Wat Tyler, had broken out in England. John Ball, a secular priest, and a supposed disciple of Wickliffe, was said to have done much to excite the spirit of insubordination then prevalent in that kingdom. His well-known distich—

“ When Adam delved and Eve span,
Where was then the gentleman?”

is familiar to most persons who have a tolerable acquaintance with English history, and its appeal to the original equality of our race is apt to affect the hearts of men of generous sensibilities, and especially of those who belong to a down-trodden class. It is a matter of perfect notoriety, that ages before Luther, and even before the time of Wickliffe, insurrections of the common people had broken out in various countries of Europe. Hume mentions insurrections in Flanders and France that had preceded those in England during the reign of Richard II. D'Aubigne himself, a very few pages before that from which Mr. Hamill's extract is taken, uses the following language: “ A political ferment, very different from that which the gospel brings with it, had long been secretly working in the empire. Sinking under secular and ecclesiastical oppression, and in some of the States, forming part of the seigneurial property, and liable to sale with it, the people began to threaten to rise in insurrection and burst their fetters.” He then goes on to mention various insurrections that had taken place in different parts of Germany, and also in Hungary, before either Luther or Munzer had become a prominent actor on the theatre of the world. From all this, it is perfectly evident that neither Luther nor Munzer, nor the Anabaptists, originated the commotions in Germany. They originated from the oppressions of the princes and nobles under the feudal system. It is altogether probable, however, that the example of Luther, in rebelling against his ecclesiastical superiors, might have encouraged the peasants in rebelling against their civil tyrants. The revolt of Luther was the application of a lighted torch to a powder magazine. This is according to the natural course of things. There is no doubt that Luther would have restrained the peasants from insurrection, had it been in his power; but he had raised a hurricane which he

could not possibly govern. Ignorant and debased as were the German peasants, they could not avoid making an application of the doctrine of the Reformation to the civil relations of life; and as Bancroft says, "the plebeian sect of Anabaptists, with greater consistency than Luther, threatened an end to kingcraft, spiritual dominion, tythes, and vassalage." Who blames them? They only attempted to do what our fathers achieved. Again: It is altogether probable, as D'Aubigne says, that long before the Reformation, a feeling of religion had mingled itself with the political elements of resistance. There is no doubt that the lower order of Romish priests, sprung as they were from the common people, and sympathizing with them, had darkly brooded over their wrongs, and fostered a spirit of resistance. There is equally little doubt that, after the breaking out of the disturbances subsequent to Luther's quarrel with the papacy, Munzer, one of the leaders of the peasants, did appeal to the religious element that is everywhere found in human nature, and attempt to make use of it as the means of reconstructing the political institutions of society. How far he was an imposter, and how far an enthusiast, it is impossible for us to know. Probably, like thousands of others, he was a compound of both. Had he succeeded, he would have been hailed as a patriot and a hero. Germany might have revered her peasant hero, as France reveres her Joan of Arc. But it was not so to be; the peasants under their various leaders, were everywhere crushed. The party was trodden under foot. An unsuccessful cause soon becomes an unpopular one. The Roman Catholics accused Luther and his friends of being the authors of the late confusions, and they in turn laid the blame upon the Anabaptists. They being the weak party, were made the scapegoats, and had to bear the odium of atrocities committed by them in common with others. I pretend not to deny the atrocities committed by the peasants; nor do I pretend to deny that Munzer, and other Anabaptists, were concerned in the disturbances. But I do not see the justice of holding up to public odium the sins of Munzer and the peasants, while those of the nobles are passed over without a breath of censure; nor of making a particular religious community responsible for political commotions in which they only took a part along with others. No one, I suppose, will pretend that the rebels consisted entirely of Anabaptists. The truth is, there is every rea-

son to believe, that if the reasonable demands of the peasants had been complied with, all the subsequent horrors would have been avoided. Let any one read their demands, as contained in the twelve articles, and no one, with an American heart in his bosom, will deny their justice. Let any one read over so common a book as D'Aubigne's History, and he will be convinced that the peasants could not have exceeded the nobles in their atrocious cruelty. Similar scenes to those which took place in Germany, always accompany civil war in a barbarous age and country. But to show conclusively that it was the *Democratic*, and not any *religious* principle whatever that caused the disturbances in Germany, it will be sufficient to quote a single sentence from D'Aubigne. He is speaking of those places in which the peasants had prevailed: "Equality of ranks, that dream of Democrats, was established in aristocratic Germany." This sentence is fraught with meaning, and is a key to the whole subject.

But, says some one of the opponents of the Baptists—these German fanatics, these odious Anabaptists, taught not only that magistracy and private property ought to be abolished, but that polygamy ought to be allowed. Suppose they did; what then? It only shows that they were a very different class of men from the Baptists, either of England or America, and, consequently, that it is doing the latter the grossest injustice to confound them with men so totally dissimilar. The only points of resemblance, if the common accounts of the German Anabaptists can be relied on, between them and the modern Baptists, will be found to consist in the coincidence of their views on the mode and subjects of Baptism. The attempt to identify classes so dissimilar, reminds one of Capt. Fluellin's attempt to make out points of comparison between Alexander the Great and King Harry V. Alexander was born in Macedon, and Harry was born in Monmouth, and there was a river in Macedon, and also a river in Monmouth. We Baptists have just this to say, that if the German Anabaptists held views subversive of the interests of society, the origin of those views must be sought elsewhere than in their opinions concerning baptism. Every candid man will admit that the belief that baptism is rightly performed by immersion, and that only persons making a profession of faith in Christ should be baptized, is altogether consistent with all the duties of citizenship. No one in our country will stultify himself by asserting the contrary. I wil-

lingly admit that a belief of this sort does conflict with any scheme for the union of Church and State. In any other point of view the Baptist creed is at least harmless to society. It would certainly be both foolish and unjust for us to upbraid our Pedo-baptist brethen with the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the crusade of Simon De Montfort against the Albigenses, because, forsooth, the popish persecutors and inquisitors happen to be Pedo-baptists. Equally unjust is it, for us to be held responsible for anything else than our avowed sentiments. If men holding our sentiments on the subject of baptism, blended with them other sentiments with which they have no necessary connection, dangerous to society, we are in no respect responsible. It would be quite as just to make the Republicans of the United States responsible for the excesses of the French Jacobins.

J. A. P.

Nozube County, Mississippi.

D.

Referred to in page 166.

A NEW TESTAMENT BISHOP.

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 PETER, v. 1-4.

To redeem a promise made during the foregoing discussion, we proceed to submit some thoughts upon the office of a "*New Testament Bishop*."

And let us premise at the commencement that we utterly repudiate all authority upon this subject but the New Testament. Huge masses of learned lumber, under the general cognomen of "*the Fathers*," have been dragged into the discussion of this question, as if they were of equal authority with the sacred writings. Now, we protest, that as Christ is the sole King in Zion, as He only can know what is pleasing to himself, that nothing shall be received in evidence but what bears the inscription of his Spirit. Then, "what saith the scripture? How readest thou?"

In the New Testament, the word *Episcopus* (Bishop) and its cognates, as applicable to the ministry, occur seven times. It is used *three* times theoretically—that is as applying to the office designated. It is applied *three* times to persons exercising the functions of that office. And it is applied *once* to Christ himself. And “as nothing is to be received as an article of Christian faith which is not somewhere taught with perspicuity,” and as that “perspicuity is to be sought for where the subject in question is expressly handled,” we propose examining each of these passages, for the purpose of ascertaining, as far as we are able, the rights, duties and privileges of “the Bishop of the New Testament.”

In the first chapter of Acts, it is applied to the apostolic office: “His *bishopric* (*Episcopos*) let another take.” But as Judas had no successor beyond the immediate appointee of the Church at Jerusalem—at least Protestants have always so affirmed—we suppose this passage has no reference to a *permanent* office in the Church.—The *office* of an apostle ceased, when the “*signs of an apostle*” ceased. These signs were—healing the sick—raising the dead—speaking with tongues—conferring the gift of the Holy Ghost, &c. &c. The assumption of such power in the Christian ministry now, would be not less absurd than it would be impious and blasphemous.

The next passage which relates to this office is found in Acts xx. 28. “Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers* (*episkopous*) to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” That the word *episkopous*, in this text, ought to have been translated *bishops*, all the world are agreed. To whom, then, was this language addressed? The answer to this question is found in the 17th verse: “And from Miletus he (Paul) sent to Ephesus, and called the *elders* of the church,” to whom he made the address, of which the 28th verse is a part. *Elder* and *bishop*, in this connection, are, without doubt, *synonymous terms*. As this is doubtless the *most* important passage in the New Testament, bearing upon the bishop’s office, we could have wished that the diction of the Spirit had been followed, instead of the special instructions of a pedantic king. Excellent as is our common version in the main, it is to be remembered, that it was originated and completed under the auspices of Episcopacy, and that the translators were interdicted from translating eo-

clesiastical terms that had long been in use. But this mistranslation furnishes an irrefutable argument against the arrogant assumptions of Episcopacy, to lord it over God's ministers. Had they translated the term *episkopous* in this connection, as they did in other places, it would have been a death blow to Episcopal domination. The common reader of the sacred volume would then have seen, just what the Holy Spirit designed to teach—that every Elder of the Ephesian Church was a bishop—that the jurisdiction of a bishop was, not over so many hundreds or thousands of churches and their pastors, but over the particular “flock” of which he is a member—that he is appointed to his charge by the Holy Ghost—that he is “*reverently to obey*,” not his “superiors” in the sacred profession, for he has none, but “the King of kings, and the Lord of lords.”

Now, according to the Episcopal theory, Timothy was the first and principal bishop of Ephesus, and upon him devolved the duty of consecrating his successor. But if this were so, why did not Paul single him out at this solemn interview with these elders, and command them *reverently to obey* him, as their *superior*. But they all and each received the same charge “to feed the flock.” Not one word is said either to him, or any other by way of designation to pre-eminence in office. If ever an opportunity offered itself to the great Apostle of the Gentiles, to appoint a principal office in the Church, a diocesan bishop, surely this was the occasion—an occasion so full of tenderness, when he had just reminded them that “grievous wolves” would come in and rend the flock. This passage, then, so far from sustaining the claims of modern episcopacy to its unwarrantable assumption of “ecclesiastical and temporal power” in the churches, proves the very reverse. It proves that there was a plurality of bishops in a single church, and that the entire duties here enforced upon the elders or bishops of Ephesus, are such, *and only such* as appertain to every minister of the gospel who has been “made a bishop” by the Holy Ghost. We may observe before leaving this point, that Wicliff, and “even the Romish version of 1584,” has rendered *episkopous*, “*bishops*,” in this passage.

The next reference to the office of bishop which claims our attention, is found in Paul's salutation to the Phillipian church, in the opening of his epistle: “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, *with*

the bishops and deacons." Here, as in the former instance, there is a plurality of bishops in a single church—nor is there any reference to the slightest pre-eminence which either one of them sustained over the others. They are all addressed in terms implying the most perfect equality. And then observe the order of their salutation. First the church as a body is addressed—"to all the saints which are at Philippi:"—then "the bishops and deacons," the officers, spiritual and secular. This is not without its significancy. All the epistles of the New Testament unmistakably convey the idea, that the Apostles uniformly and invariably recognized the churches as possessing the power to appoint to office those who were "full of the Holy Ghost," as well as the power to depose. In a word, they were recognized as competent to exercise all the power, ecclesiastical and temporal, which Christ ever delegated to man. Hence they are regarded as "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." And no ingenuity can torture this passage so as to favor either Romish, English, or Methodist Episcopacy—an Episcopacy which assumes to rule the church of Christ ecclesiastically and temporally, adopting its faith and discipline, appointing and removing its pastors at pleasure, and directly or indirectly controlling all its property.

We now come to the next most important passages in the Scriptures which refer to this office—Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus. The Apostle evidently intended to paint a character for all coming time—to present a *full portraiture of a New Testament Bishop*. Here it is: "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into condemnation of the devil," &c.—1 Tim. iii. 2-7. Much to the same purpose are his instructions to Titus: "For this cause, left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine,

no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Titus, i. 5-9. Upon these passages we remark,

1st. That they present to us the *personal character*, the *intellectual and moral qualifications*, and the *duties*, of a New Testament bishop. His passions and appetites, as well as his domestic temper and habits—the mental and moral characteristics for which he is to be eminent—and the duties of "taking care of the Church of God," and, as he elsewhere declares, of "rightly dividing the word of truth, giving to each his portion in due season," are all presented in detail.

2dly. These qualifications and duties are such as appertain to every minister of the Gospel. You may look in vain for any suggestion in the entire portraiture, of which any minister is allowed to be destitute, saving only those which refer to his domestic relations, provided, like Paul, he is not a married man. No church, however small, can prosper spiritually, without such a bishop. It is an essential office, which belongs of right to every legally constituted church of Jesus Christ. No less an officer than an Apostolic bishop was to be "ordained in every city" where there was a church. These passages have furnished themes for ordination services in all ages. From them "a Baxter could derive means to reach the consciences of ministers with almost a crushing sense of their responsibility," and a Robert Hall becomes eloquent with all that "the tongues of men and of angels" could do, to impress their "discouragements and supports." Indeed, does not every "good minister of Jesus Christ" instinctively appropriate these passages to himself as containing the sum and substance of his ordination vows?

3rdly. In Paul's epistle to Timothy, there are but two officers recognized as essential or necessary for a properly organized Church—bishops and deacons—the one supervising the *spiritual*, the other the *temporal* affairs of the body. These are the only two orders of officers, or ministers, which divine inspiration has anywhere authorized to be perpetuated in the churches. If the converse of this can be proved, let it be done.

4thly. In the passage in Titus, as in the one in the 20th of Acts,

which we have already considered, the term *elder* (*presbuteros*, ac. pl. of *presbuteros*.) is used as synonymous with *bishop*. In the vernacular of Paul, all elders or presbyters were bishops, and all bishops were elders. The most careless reader cannot fail to see this. He sets out to describe an elder, and drops that name and describes a bishop, for the express purpose of showing that they are identical. "The Apostle," says Dr. Curtis, "holds up the lamp of inspiration in his face and says, 'Titus, this bishop is your only man for a blameless elder.' But modern Episcopacy dashes away the lamp from Apostolic hands, and says, 'This is no such man.' The bishop is a different man from the priest or elder: of another order of men, immeasurably 'superior.' Who are we to believe? Which of these conflicting authorities shall be decisive with us?"*

Finally. If Paul is not describing the common pastor or bishop of the New Testament—the faithful, laborious, efficient preacher of the Gospel—in these passages, pray tell us in what part of the holy volume is he described? Is there a single qualification or duty appertaining to Paul's bishop, which does not apply in all its force to every pastor of every church?

Now, reader, contrast this bishop of Paul, with the bishop of modern days—Romish, English, and Methodist. In each of these denominations, the principle of clerical absolutism reigns triumphant. The governmental economy of the New Testament is completely inverted—the *Churches belong to the ministers, instead of the ministers to the Churches*. The servants have become the masters, and the masters the servants. And the only economy which infinite wisdom has ever devised to elevate man in the scale of being—to invest him with all the rights and prerogatives of a freeman, of citizenship in the great commonwealth of Israel—has been perverted into an instrument of spiritual and temporal despotism, to rivet more firmly the chains of slavery upon down-trodden humanity! Yes, the very charter of freedom, which the Triune God has granted to our race, has been wrenched from its constituency, and the solemn sanctions of religion have been invoked to degrade still

* See "Bible Episcopacy," p. 83, by Thomas Curtis, D.D.—a work, by the way, to which I am indebted for several valuable suggestions, and which I could wish were more generally circulated in our country.—S. H.

further, in every nation in Europe, and in most of the nations of the American continent, their outraged and suffering populace!

But our purpose at present is to apply the Apostolic portraiture of a bishop to the subject we have been discussing—the bishop of Methodism. If our information is correct, there are some twelve bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, North and South. With the membership claimed for this Church, to wit, a million and a half, there is one bishop for about every one hundred and twenty-five thousand members. On the supposition, then, that Paul, in his address to the elders of Ephesus, and in his epistles to the Philippians, Timothy and Titus, is describing a Methodist bishop, we must regard him as competent to take the “spiritual *and temporal*” oversight of one hundred and twenty-five thousand souls, besides the immense population connected with this membership, “to warn every man night and day with tears,” so as to be “pure from the blood of all men!” Can insanity itself suppose the Apostle capable of such an utter absurdity? And yet, if these passages do not describe a Methodist bishop, where is that officer described in the New Testament?

Again: There are, according to our sources of information, about eighteen thousand traveling and local preachers in the Methodist Episcopal connection in the United States. This gives us one bishop for about every one thousand five hundred preachers. If, then, Paul, in the foregoing passages, is describing a Methodist bishop, he stands convicted of having passed over in silence, of utterly *ignoring*, the very bone and sinew—the active, working, efficient laborers in the vineyard of the Lord! Of the most numerous and effective body of ministers, the men most needed, “the working clergy,” who are to bear the heat and burden of the day, nothing as to their qualifications and duties is said! Does such a supposition come within the range of credulity? And yet all this must be true on the supposition that Paul is describing a Methodist bishop!! And we would press the enquiry, if such a bishop—a bishop whose duty it is solemnly made “to fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits, to change, receive and suspend preachers, as necessity may require, and as the Discipline directs; to oversee the spiritual *and temporal* business of the Church; to decide all questions of law in an Annual Conference, subject to

appeal to a General Conference, etc. etc.—we say, if such a bishop as this is not described in these passages, where, in all God's word, is such an officer described? In the book of Discipline, the entire address of Paul to the elders of the Church at Ephesus is extracted as a part of the ordination service of a bishop, and frequent allusions, are also made in the same service to the passages we have been considering in Timothy and Titus. Of course it must be that our Methodist brethren regard these passages as furnishing the authority for this dignitary, or they would not refer to them in such a connection. Why, if every bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church had his quota of ministers (1,500) with their families, as a constant congregation, it would tax his last efforts to discharge his duty to them, as their spiritual instructor. And yet if the reference of the Discipline to these passages is legitimate, Paul is describing a *pastor of pastors*, not a pastor of Churches!

Furthermore: If the great and principal business of Paul's bishops was to "preside at the Conferences," *not of churches*, but of ministers—"to appoint the preachers to their several circuits—to change, receive, and suspend preachers, as necessity required—to oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the Church—to ordain bishops, elders and deacons," thus perpetuating *three distinct orders* in the ministry—"to decide all questions of law subject to appeal not to the Church, but to a conference of ministers, &c.—if we say, these were the great and principal duties of the bishop whom this Apostle describes is it not marvellous beyond all possibility of belief, that he should say just nothing at all upon these topics? We had always supposed that the law which created an office was the law which defined the duties of that office. The truth is, it has grown into a kind of proverb, That an authority which assumes to create an office of irresponsible, undefined, and unlimited powers and prerogatives, "whose will," to use Bishop Hamline's language, "*is omnipotent in the premises*," is a pure unmitigated tyranny. And that Paul was accessory in the remotest degree to the appointment of such an office in the Church of Christ, is a tax upon human credulity far too great for the nineteenth century.

The last passage which refers to the office of bishop, which we proposed to consider, is found in 1 Peter, v: 1-5; "The elders which are among you I exhort, *who are also an elder*, and a witness of the suffer-

ings of Christ and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, (*Episcopountes*, episcopising, i. e. exercising the bishop's office among them) not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage (literally *kleros*, clergy,) but ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Here again presbyters or elders are synonymous with bishops; and it is impossible not to perceive, that all these terms refer, beyond all doubt, to pastors of churches. Observe, *first*, the work assigned them—"Feed the flock of God." Their sole business is to preach the gospel. They are, in the language of another apostle, "to give themselves *wholly*" to this great work. Observe, *secondly*, the *sphere* of their labors—"the flock *which is among you*." The bishop is to reside "among" the flock to whom he ministers. Now, is there a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church on this continent, to whom this language applies? Nine-tenths of the membership of that Church never see their bishops, for years—nay, perhaps one half of them never saw their bishop, in all their lives. Observe, *thirdly*, that they are to be "ensamples to the flock." How can this be, if the very office which he fills utterly precludes the possibility of his ever "taking the oversight" of a single flock? How can his example be of any benefit to them, if one half of them never see him? *Fourthly*, there is no mention of any intermediate order of ministers. The elder of Peter, and the bishop of Paul, are considered as fully competent to meet all the responsibilities of the gospel ministry. *Finally* the only "chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls" which is recognized in the holy scriptures is our great and final Judge. He only has the right by his providence and spirit to "remove the candle-sticks"—the pastors—from his own Churches. And when a self-constituted dignitary in the Church shall assume the fearful prerogative of "*fixing* the appointments of preachers—of *changing, receiving and suspending*" these preachers at pleasure—no false delicacy, or sickly sentimental catholicity shall deter us from declaring, that it is a most portentous approximation to the marks which were to characterize an Apostate Church! No man will deny, that the highest office which God has ever conferred upon man, is the oversight of the spiritual interests of immortal souls. Yet this office is conferred upon every New Testament pastor or

bishop. How impious for human wisdom to institute another office, to domineer over one of God's appointment—"to lord it over God's clergy."* A less office than Peter's elder would be incompetent to the important work committed to him—a greater one, Apostolic authority never ordained.

Thus we have examined all the passages of the New Testament in which the term *episcopos* (bishop) or its cognates occur. The result is, *That the New Testament Bishop is nothing more nor less than the plain, unostentatious, humble, laborious pastor of a Church.* And if we have not proved this by the very passage upon which Episcopacy relies to sustain its unauthorized assumptions, then we confess our utter ignorance of the first principles of Biblical interpretation.

THE ELECTION AND ORDINATION OF BISHOPS AND PASTORS.

Before closing our remarks upon a "New Testament Bishop," it is proper that we offer some thoughts upon the method of choosing that officer to the oversight of the particular church committed to his charge. In "A Confession of Faith" put forth by "many congregations of christians, (baptized on a profession of their faith,) in London and the country," in the year 1689, and republished in the city of Charleston, S. C., "for the Charleston Baptist Association," in 1813, the views of the Baptists are fairly expressed in

*NOTE.—It is worth while to observe here, that the term *κλῆρος*, which our translators have rendered "HERITAGE," but which, as we have already stated, literally signifies "CLERGY," was a title which Peter gave to all Christians. Milton, in his *Prose Works*, vol. i. pp. 78-79, gives the following account of the manner in which it was appropriated to the Catholic priesthood, and the substitution of the term "LAITY" in its stead:—"And this all Christians ought to know, that the title of clergy St. Peter gave to all God's people, till Pope Higinus and the succeeding prelates took it from them, appropriating that name to themselves and their priests only; and condemning the rest of God's inheritance to an injurious and alienate condition of LAITY, they separated from them by local partitions in churches, through their gross ignorance and pride imitating the old temple, and EXCLUDING THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST FROM THE PROPERTY OF BEING MEMBERS, THE BEARING OF ORDERLY AND FIT OFFICES IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL BODY; as if they meant to sew up that Jewish veil, which Christ by his death on the cross rent in sunder."

the following item: "The way appointed by Christ for the calling of any person, fitted and gifted by the Holy Spirit, unto the office of Bishop, or elder, in a church, is, *that he be chosen thereunto by the common suffrage of the church itself*; and solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with imposition of hands of the eldership of the church, if there be any before constituted therein: and of a deacon, that he be chosen by like suffrage, and set apart by prayer, and the like imposition of hands."—*Confession*, &c. p. 56.

Baptists have always maintained, as the foregoing extract illustrates, that the power to call and qualify men for this great work is the exclusive prerogative of the Holy Spirit, while the authority of recognition and designation has been conferred upon the churches and their elders or bishops. Thus, when a successor to Judas was to be selected, the duty of making that selection was thrown upon "the hundred and twenty disciples" at Jerusalem, before the day of Pentecost. The first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, furnishes abundant proof of this. In Acts xiv. 23, it is said, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." A critical examination of this passage will determine the usage of the Apostolic churches in this particular. The word here translated "ordained," is *cheirotonesantes*, (from *cheirotoneo*) which signifies "to raise up and extend the hands; to vote by holding up the hands; to vote, to sanction by a vote." *Pickering*. Dr. A. Clark closes his commentary upon this passage as follows: "I believe the simple truth to be this, that in ancient times the people chose by the *cheirotomia* (lifting up of hands) their spiritual pastor; and the rulers of the church, whether *apostles* or *others*, appointed that person to his office by the *cheirotomesia*, or *imposition of hands*; and perhaps, each of these was thought to be necessary: the *church agreeing* in the *election* of the person; and the *rulers* of the church appointing, by *imposition of hands*, the person thus elected." The old *English Bible* translates the first clause of the verse, "*and when they had ordained them elders by election.*" Dr. Doddridge, in his *Family Expositor* says, "I have not rendered it *ordained*, because custom has, among us especially, affixed to that word, in such a connexion, the idea of *laying on hands in prayer*, to invest a person with, or mark him for the *ministerial office*: and this, which I doubt not was here done, seems to be intimated in the following clause. It seems

to me, that the word *constitute*, would properly express *the apostles presiding* in that previous choice, which probably the people signified by *cheirakonia*, the *stretching out their hands*: and this interpretation appears most naturally to suit *the circumstances of things*, as well as the *import* of the *original words* made use of." Mr. Harrington, quoted by Dr. Doddridge, renders the words, "*ordained them elders by the votes of the people*, urging the authority of Suidas, who explains *cheirotomia* by the election of magistrates, or *ratification* of laws by many, signified by holding up, or stretching out the hand." Note *in loco*.

With the foregoing exegesis, we may very readily determine the sense of this passage. "And when the elders had been *designated* by the vote of every church, and had been *ordained* by prayer with fasting, they (the apostles) commended them to the Lord," &c.

But as the most infallible way of interpreting scripture is, to compare it with scripture, we turn to the eighth chapter of 2 Cor. v. 19. Referring to his travelling companion, Luke, Paul says: "And not that only, but who was also *chosen of the churches* to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind." The same method was adopted in the selection of *deacons*. In Acts vi. 2-3, it is said, "When the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Whereupon, "seven men" were elected by the "whole multitude," "set before the Apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them." Indeed, reason unites its voice with revelation, and affirms that those who are to be entrusted with the dearest interests of the Churches—who are to be sustained by their prayers and contributions—ought to be called to that sacred office by the concurrent voice of those so vitally interested in it. It were vain for an Apostle to have exhorted his brethren to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free," if they had been denied the privilege of choosing, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, those who should teach the doctrines, and administer the laws and ordinances of the Gospel to them. And this right never was contested until the latter part of the third and the beginning of the

fourth century. This can be abundantly sustained by an appeal to church history. Take the following extract from *Mosheim*. Referring to "the form of Church Government" in the second century, he says: "The form of church government which began to exist in the preceding century [i. e. the first century], was in this century more industriously established and confirmed in all its parts. One president, or *bishop*, presided over each church. He was created by the common suffrage of the whole people. . . . Subject to the bishop, and also to the presbyters, were the servants or *deacons*, who were divided into certain classes, because all the duties which the interest of the church required, could not well be attended to by all.

"During a great part of this century, all the churches continued to be, as at first, *independent* of each other, or were connected by no associations or confederations. Each church was a kind of small independent republic, governing itself by its own laws, enacted, or at least sanctioned by the people. But in process of time it became customary for all the Christian churches within the same province, to unite and form a sort of larger society or commonwealth; and in the manner of confederated republics, to hold their conventions at stated times, and there deliberate for the common advantage of the whole confederation. This custom first arose among the Greeks, with whom a [political] confederation of cities, and the consequent conventions of their several delegates, had been long known; but afterwards the utility of the thing being seen, the custom extended through all countries where there were Christian churches. Such conventions of delegates from several churches assembled for deliberation, were called by the Greeks *Synods*, and by the Latins, *Councils*; and the laws agreed upon in them were called *canons*, that is, *rules*.

"These councils, of which no vestige appears before the middle of this century, changed nearly the whole form of the Church. For by them, in the first place, the ancient rights and privileges of the people were very much abridged; and, on the other hand, the influence and authority of the bishops were not a little augmented. At first the bishops did not deny that they were merely the representatives of their Churches, and that they acted in the name of the people; *but by little and little, they made higher pretensions, and maintained*

that power was given them by CHRIST himself, to dictate rules of faith and conduct to the people. In the next place, the perfect equality and parity of all bishops, which existed in early times, these councils gradually subverted. For it was necessary that one of the confederated bishops of a province should in those conventions be entrusted with some authority and power over the others; and hence originated the prerogatives of *Metropolitan*. And lastly, when the custom of holding these councils had extended over the Christian world, and the universal church had acquired the form of a vast republic, composed of many lesser ones, certain head men were to be placed over it in different parts of the world, as central points in their respective countries. Hence came the *Patriarchs*, and ultimately a *Prince of Patriarchs*—the Roman Pontiff." *Mosheim's Church History*, vol. I., pp. 116–117.

It is a maxim among politicians, *That political power is always stealing from the many to the few*; and we see from the foregoing extract, that it is no less true in *ecclesiastical power*. A most suggestive lesson is furnished in the above, to the apologists of episcopacy in all its forms. First, a "confederation" of "Christian churches within the same province" was formed. This, however, left the churches free and independent; and had the matter ended here, no harm could have resulted. On the contrary, we can well conceive how such confederations, or associations, might accomplish a vast amount of good in promoting the general interests of Christianity. Indeed, such appears to have been the usage of the Apostolic churches. See Acts, 15th chapter. But, secondly, these *Synods* or *Councils*, began to adopt *canons of faith* for the churches, thus assuming the prerogatives of *Christ* himself—still, however, recognizing themselves as "the mere representatives of the churches," acting "in the name of the people"—a pretext which is never wanting in either political or ecclesiastical aspirants. Finally, as these rights were silently conceded to them by the churches, "by little and little," they "made higher pretensions," and maintained that *Christ* himself had given them authority to *dictate* laws for the "faith and conduct of the people!" Thus did "the mystery of iniquity work," until out of its blasphemous usurpations arose "the Man of Sin—the Son of Perdition," who "ruled the earth with a rod of iron," and "drove the church of *Christ* into the wilderness, where she abode for twelve hundred and sixty years!"

We close by simply inquiring, How long will American Christians—Christians who live under the happiest political economy on earth—concede to their spiritual rulers that which, if it were demanded of them in their political relations, would drench the American continent in the blood of a second revolution? The Discipline, or Constitution, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, makes it the duty of a bishop to “fix the appointments” of every pastor and presiding elder in their connection throughout every State and Territory of the Union. “*His will is omnipotent in the premises.*” The very moment a congregation of Episcopal Methodists assumes the exercise of this right—a right no less dear to freemen than it should be to Christians—a right guarantied to them in virtue of their heavenly citizenship—a right which despotism only can contest—the *right to say who shall share the highest confidence which man can place in his fellow-man*—that very moment they cease to be Episcopal Methodists. With such antecedents as Episcopacy presents in former history, we see not how a Christian community, living in this free and happy land, can do otherwise than to seize and strangle this monster in its infancy, ere its history here shall be but too faithful a counterpart of its history in the old world; and restore the Apostolic practice of allowing every church to choose its own officers, spiritual and temporal. If its membership have not sufficient faith, piety and intelligence to do this, it were an outrage upon language to call them a church of Jesus Christ. His churches are called “a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” And if such a constituency as this, filled with the Spirit of the Redeemer, are incapable of deciding who are competent to “preach among them the unsearchable riches of Christ,” no self-constituted “bishop” that ever wore the mitre can supply the deficiency.

E.

Referred to on page 233.

In saying that “Episcopacy may well afford to place her mitre upon the heads of such men as as McKENDREE and BASCOM, if for nothing else, to purchase an indemnity from their merciless castigations,” it is affirmed that we surely cannot believe our own insinua-

tion!—that it is quite unworthy of us! To what extent we have done Dr. BASCOM injustice in the premises, may be still further ascertained by the following letter, addressed by him to the Rev. D. B. DORSEY, who was suspended from the ministry by the Baltimore Conference, in 1827, for the part he took in promoting the circulation of the “Mutual rights of ministers and members in the Methodist Episcopal Church,”—a paper devoted to the advocacy of such a reformation in the Methodist polity, as would give the laity a REPRESENTATION in its councils. Who would ever suppose that a man who could write thus, would ever afterwards accept the “chief seat” in the “star chamber?” That a man who could characterize the decision of an ecclesiastical judicatory, as an “overbearing act of abandoned tyranny!”—as perpetrating a “*labored deed of hard-earned infamy!*”—as holding a “lordly inquisition over the rights and consciences of those who have too much intelligence and too much candor to think and act by their prescription!”—nay, that he should more than insinuate, that this same assemblage of Church dignitaries should “seek to *increase the MENTAL iniquitude, to strengthen desolation without,*” of their doomed victim, “AND SO SEND HIM TO A PREMATURE GRAVE!!”—that such a man should afterwards accept the highest office which such a body as this could confer, we believe can only be accounted for as we have stated, to wit: That the “blushing honors” of “our Episcopacy” struck the “eloquent Bascom” with a kind of mental and moral *paralysis*. But here is the letter—it is written over the signature of “VINCEX:”

“April 27, 1827.

“MY DEAR SIR.—Not knowing you *personally*, nor the *place* of your residence, I ask the privilege of addressing you through the medium of the Mutual Rights, for *approving* and *recommending* of which, you now stand *suspended* as a Methodist travelling preacher! The Baltimore Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church—with three or more bishops present to direct and shape its measures—have, by a solemn resolution, after several days deliberation, *officially* decided that a presbyter in the Church of God deserves *punishment* and *disgrace*, because he adopts opinions and sentiments, on the subject of Church government, which are received and acted upon by a large majority of Protestant Christians, throughout the various divisions of the religious world! I cannot pause, my bro-

ther, to write the many denunciations that common sense, throughout an outraged community, will pronounce upon this overbearing act of abandoned tyranny! But I hasten to enquire why were *you* selected as the *victim*, the *sole* victim, when it was in proof before them that others were in the same condemnation! Why did not 'my lord of Canterbury' who 'rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm' among you, and by whom even bishops are tithed at will, together with the active and zealous doctor, the principal officer in the 'star chamber,' select a goodly number of victims, and offer an *appalling* hecatomb at once! Was it because heaven had deprived you of health? Was it because you were remote from home and friends? Was it because, like your Master, you were poor, and with the humble sharer of fortunes 'had scarcely where to lay your head?' Did they wish, by increasing your *mental* inquietude, to strengthen the desolation *without*, and so send you to a premature grave? Or was it intended by the *horror* of the example made of you, to say to other reformers, 'If *you* have the *word*, we have the *sword*!' I cannot refrain from asking where *three* or *four* members of the Baltimore Conference were *during this LABORED deed of HARD-EARNED INFAMY*? Did they sit by in inglorious silence? But, my brother, be not discouraged; recollect that the great father of us all as Methodists, was, by a similar body and in the *same city* forty years ago, declared unworthy of a name or place in that communion,* in the bosom of which you now find yourself *honorably degraded*. When Mr. Wesley was informed of this, he declared in a letter now in my possession, that the American bishop had 'no more connection with him.' But I trust you will not so decide in relation to your blinded and prejudiced brethren. 'Yet a little while,' and this stupid, *Laudean* zeal will be cooled in the humiliation and disgrace of your persecutors; public indignation will chastise their pitiful pretensions to *lordly* inquisition over the rights and consciences of those who have too much intelligence and too much candor to think and act by their prescription! To conclude, my dear sir, I beg you to accept the best wishes of a stranger; 'faint not in the day of evil;' the honorary overthrow you have sustained,

*Alluding to the action of the General Conference, in 1787, in voting the name of John Wesley from the minutes. We suppose this was in revenge for Mr. Wesley's saying in his letter to Mr. Asbury, "Men may call me a KNAVE, or a FOOL, a RASCAL, a SCOUNDREL, but they shall never by my consent call me a BISHOP."

for the rights of conscience, will make strangers your friends: on hearing of the treatment you and others received at the Baltimore Conference, ten or twelve persons within my charge have declared for *reform*, and are ready to aid you with their influence and purses—Wishing the speedy restoration of your health, and that you may live to see the cause of religious oppression banished from the Church and the world,

I remain yours, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus,

VINDEX.

“Rev. D. B. DORSEY.”

[Paris’ Hist. of the Pro. Meth. Ch. p. 136, 138.]

F.

Referred to on page 324.

That we have rightly construed the above clause in the Discipline there can be no reasonable doubt. To prove this, we introduce the following remarks of the editor of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, published in the city of New-York; the parent of all the family of Advocates now in the United States. He says: “Now, whatever others may think, the Methodists have always professed to believe that the Head of the Church still gives us pastors and teachers. * * * * To these (pastors and teachers,) we accord the scriptural authority of admitting to the ordinances of the Lord’s house such as believe through their word.

“We know nothing of the right of the Society to admit members into Church fellowship; and the Methodist preacher who concedes this right, betrays his trust, and should be held amenable for his delinquency to his brethren. * * *

“But whatever controversy may exist on this question, elsewhere, or however it may have been settled among other denominations, it is certain that the right of the Society to admit and expel Church members, is not Wesleyan nor Episcopalian Church Methodism. ‘We have no such practice, neither any of the Churches’ acting under our Discipline.

“The admission and expulsion of Church members, by a vote of the Society, is AS ABSURD IN THEORY AS IT WOULD BE RUINOUS IN PRACTICE.” Quoted by Rev. J. R. GRAVES, in the *Iron Wheel*, pp. 243-244.

NOTICES OF THE PRESS.

NOTICES OF THE DISCUSSION ON METHODIST EPISCOPACY, FROM
THE RELIGIOUS PRESS.

The New-York "*Christian Advocate and Journal*" (Methodist) says: "This discussion took place in the columns of the South Western Baptist, of which Mr. Henderson is editor. It appears to have been conducted in a Christian spirit, and has the rare merit of being satisfactory to both parties, being 'published at the mutual request of Baptists and Methodists,' and recommended by official Church meetings of both denominations."

The "*Charleston Christian Advocate*" (Methodist) of May first, concludes a notice of the work as follows:—"We have before us a calm, dispassionate, *gentlemanly* (rare indeed!) discussion of the question, to which, with full confidence that our system is free enough for liberty, and stringent only so far as healthy and united action requires, we call the attention of those who may doubt on the subject."

The "*Western Recorder*," Louisville, Ky. (Baptist), of June 11th, 1856, says:—"We have time as yet to give it but a hasty perusal, but are willing to concede that it is an able and thorough examination of the foundation and tendency of Methodism. Mr. Henderson, who is the able editor of the "South Western Baptist," has shown himself in this discussion to be a formidable antagonist as a controversialist, and has sifted Methodist Episcopacy most thoroughly. He has the advantage of his opponent, in the ground, and maintains it throughout the contest. But Mr. Hamill has come nobly forward to the vindication of what he believes to be the truth, and has made as good a defence as his cause would allow. * * * *

"The Southern Baptist Publication Society are deserving much credit for the very fine taste and style in which the work is got up. We commend it to a careful perusal by clergy and laymen of both denominations."

The "*Home and Foreign Journal*," Richmond, Va., for June, 1856, has the following:—

"This discussion originally appeared in the South Western Baptist, published at Tuskegee, Ala., of which Mr. Henderson is editor, and

was continued for several consecutive weeks. Its publication in book form was demanded by the expressed desire of several Baptist Associations and Methodist Conferences, and now appears in an edition of four thousand copies. In looking over its pages, we have been gratified with the kindly spirit in which the controversy was conducted. Both parties were earnest and determined, and yet neither indulged in that bitterness and rancor which too often mar controversial writings. As the title indicates, Mr. Henderson proposes to show that the Methodist form of Church government is anti-scriptural and anti-Republican, because the sole power is vested in the ministry, while his opponent appears as the advocate of the system. The reader of the book will not fail to notice how dexterously Mr. Hamill avoids the main question by introducing several side issues, which are not relevant to the subject. We cordially commend the book as it presents the argument as conducted by two able men, and no one will find his good taste offended by low puerilities or vulgar abuse. Mr. Henderson deserves the thanks of his brethren for the manner in which he has exposed the prominent features of the Methodist Church polity."

The New York "*Christian Review*" (Baptist), for the quarter ending, July, 1856, contains a notice of the work, from which we make the following extracts:

"The letters composing the volume originally appeared in the columns of the '*South Western Baptist*,' from April, with occasional intervals, to near the close of November, 1855. It would seem that their perusal made a deep and salutary impression. A general desire prevailed that they should be published in a more permanent and accessible form. So peremptory was the demand, that the gentlemen who conducted the discussion felt themselves obliged to comply. Whereby we have the light and shade of Methodist Episcopacy—the shade predominating.

"The discussion is conducted with much ability, and generally with candor, and in a becoming spirit. We cannot divest ourselves of the conviction, however, that our Methodist brother has introduced in the discussion much that is quite irrelevant. Against substantial argument and objections to Methodism, you are met with far-fetched, and often imaginary reasons, which with superficial minds may subserve a purpose, but with others they can only weaken the cause they were advanced to support.

"Moreover, Mr. Hamill not unfrequently plants himself upon hypotheses which are not tenable. The observing must perceive that in many of his positions he is beating the air, or contending with a man of straw, which his imagination has created. Had we space, it might be well to point out some of these false positions upon which he relies for the support of his cause. But the reader will do this for himself. Mr. Henderson has the advantage of his antagonist in these particulars. He is more careful both of the

positions he assumes and of the arguments adduced in their support. He states with much fairness the palpable objections to Methodist Episcopacy, and fortifies his positions generally with relevant and reliable arguments. The discussion will well repay a careful perusal."

The "*Religious Herald*," whose editor, William Sands, has been aptly styled the *Nestor* of the *corps* editorial, says: "Mr. Hamill is an able writer, and has sustained his cause with much address; and Elder Henderson has, by his ability, research and acumen, acquired high distinction as an able controversialist, scholar and theologian. This is an interesting volume, and worthy of an extended circulation."

From an editorial notice of the work in the "*Baptist Watchman*," edited by the Rev. M. Hillsman, Knoxville, Tenn., we select the following: "The reader will be struck with the kind and Christian spirit which pervades the discussion, the entire absence of any personal reflection, or reproachful epithet. The Baptist can read Mr. Hamill's defence without pain, and with respect for the author, while the Methodist can read Mr. Henderson's affirmation with similar feelings. To both Baptists and Methodists who feel interested on the subject, we can recommend the book as the most satisfactory, on both sides of the question of anything we have seen."

The "*Biblical Reporter*," Raleigh, N. C., edited by Rev. J. J. James, says: "This book contains one of the best specimens of protracted controversy it has ever been our good fortune to meet with. Both Methodist and Baptist succeeded in maintaining a kind and courteous spirit."

"We are glad that this discussion has been printed, and hope that it will be scattered over the land. Every Baptist and every Methodist in our country ought to have a copy of it.

The Baltimore "*True Union*," edited by Rev. F. Wilson, contains the following: "Whoever wishes to see the scriptural and republican character of Episcopal Methodism ably attacked and ingeniously defended, can find in this volume full gratification. The disputants maintain a good spirit, and seldom allow themselves to be diverted from the main question in debate, to personalities. We think that a far more candid and just view of the subject can be obtained by reading such a discussion, than by looking only at one side of the matter."

The "*Tennessee Baptist*," edited by Rev. J. R. Graves, makes the following allusion to the volume: "No man whose writings we have read, can make a better defence of Methodism than Mr. Hamill has made; and in this book we see with what ease Bro. Henderson has swept away his defence, and established the fact that Episcopal

Methodism is Anti-Republican, and more, an unmitigated and degraded clerical tyranny, opposed to God's word as well as Republicanism. Bro. H. has acquitted himself manfully, and proved himself a polemic of no ordinary power," &c.

The "*American Baptist Memorial*," conducted by B. Manly, jr. President of the Richmond, Va., Female College, B. Manly, sr., D.D., of Charleston, and Prof. T. F. Curtis, of Lewisburg University, Pa., announces it as a forthcoming volume thus: "Its courtesy and dignity, together with the kind feelings maintained throughout between the disputants, render it an exception to most works of controversy—while it cannot fail to interest those who desire to examine the subject."

The "*South Western Baptist*" says: "The favor with which the first edition of the late discussion on Methodist Episcopacy has been received by the public, has surprised us no little, and awakens in the minds of the parties, sentiments of gratitude to the kind friends and brethren who have aided them in extending its circulation. That an edition of four thousand copies of a work of this description should have been disposed of in about four months, is quite encouraging to us. Most of the first edition has been disposed of in Alabama and Georgia. We have many orders from other States which cannot be filled. Indeed, there are many important points in this State to which we have not been able to send a single copy. We hope, however, to accommodate all our friends before many months."

